

FORM PTO-1390
(REV 12-29-99)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER

TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES
DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US)
CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371

29273/557

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 CFR 1.5)

09/914471

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.
PCT/JP99/01679INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE
March 31, 1999PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED
25 May 1998

TITLE OF INVENTION MAGNETIC RECORDING MEDIUM AND MAGNETIC STORAGE DEVICE

APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US YAMAMOTO, Tomoo et al.

Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:

1. ☒ This is a **FIRST** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
2. ☐ This is a **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
3. ☒ This express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)) at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set in 35 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and 39(1).
4. ☐ A proper Demand for International Preliminary Examination was made by the 19th month from the earliest claimed priority date.
5. ☒ A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2))
 - a. ☐ is transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☒ has been transmitted by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US).
6. ☒ A translation of the International Application into English (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).
7. ☐ Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3))
 - a. ☐ are transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ have been transmitted by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.
 - d. ☒ have not been made and will not be made.
8. ☐ A translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).
9. ☒ An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)).
10. ☐ A translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).

Items 11. to 16. below concern document(s) or information included:

11. ☒ An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
12. ☒ An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
13. ☒ A **FIRST** preliminary amendment.
☐ A **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** preliminary amendment.
14. ☐ A substitute specification.
15. ☐ A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.
16. ☒ Other items or information:

MON NO. 09/914471 INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/JP99/01679

ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER 29273/557

7. ☒ The following fees are submitted:

BASIC NATIONAL FEE (37 CFR 1.492 (a) (1) - (5)) :

Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO and International Search Report not prepared by the EPO or JPO \$970.00

International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but International Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO \$840.00

International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO \$690.00

International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) but all claims did not satisfy provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$670.00

International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$96.00

ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =

CALCULATIONS PTO USE ONLY

\$ 860.00

Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than ☐ 20 ☐ 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(e)).

\$ -0-

CLAIMS	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE
Total claims	21 - 20 =	1	X \$18.00
Independent claims	7 - 3 =	4	X \$78.00
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM(S) (if applicable)			+ \$260.00

\$ 18.00

\$ 320.00

\$ -0-

TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =

\$1,198.00

Reduction of 1/2 for filing by small entity, if applicable. A Small Entity Statement must also be filed (Note 37 CFR 1.9, 1.27, 1.28).

\$ -0-

SUBTOTAL =

\$1,198.00

Processing fee of \$130.00 for furnishing the English translation later than ☐ 20 ☐ 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f)).

\$ -0-

TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =

\$1,198.00

Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31). \$40.00 per property

\$ 40.00

TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =

\$1,238.00

Amount to be refunded: \$
charged: \$

a. ☐ A check in the amount of \$_____ to cover the above fees is enclosed.

b. ☒ Please charge my Deposit Account No. 11-0600 in the amount of \$1,238.00 to cover the above fees. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

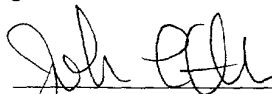
c. ☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-0600. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.

SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO

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SIGNATURE
John C. Altmiller

NAME
25,951

REGISTRATION NUMBER

PATENT

Docket No. 29273/557

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANTS : Tomoo YAMAMOTO et al.
SERIAL NO. : (Natl. Phase of PCT/JP99/01679)
FILED : 28 August 2001
FOR : MAGNETIC RECORDING MEDIUM AND MAGNETIC
STORAGE DEVICE
GROUP ART UNIT : (Unassigned)
EXAMINER : (Unassigned)
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER
FOR PATENTS
Washington, DC 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

S I R:

Prior to examination of the above-identified application, please enter the following amendments.

In the Specification:

Please amend the specification as follows.

Page 2, after the first full paragraph, change "Disclosure of the Invention" to --Summary of the Invention--.

Page 13, after the sixth full paragraph, change "Best Mode for Carrying out the Invention" to --Detailed Description--.

In the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon directly or indirectly with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer containing at least Ti in an amount not less than 35 at.% and not more than 65 at.% and Al in an amount not less than 35 at.% and not more than 65 at.%.
2. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 1, wherein the orientation control layer substantially has the L10-type (AuCu I-type) crystal structure.
3. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon directly or indirectly with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer having the crystal structure substantially of L10-type (AuCu I-type).
4. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 1, wherein the underlayer is that of double-layer structure which consists of a first underlayer made of Cr and a second underlayer which is formed on the first underlayer containing at least one species of element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti.
5. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 1, which has an intermediate layer between the magnetic layer and the underlayer, said intermediate layer being made of a material containing Co and not less than 25 at.% Cr.
6. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer containing at least one element selected from group A (consisting of Ni and Co) in an amount of from 30 at.% to 60 at.%, Al in an amount from 20 at.% to 30 at.%, and one element selected from group B (consisting of Ti and Zr) in an amount from 20 at.% to 30 at.%.

7. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 6, wherein the orientation control layer substantially has the L21type (Cu_2AlMn type) crystal structure.
8. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon directly or indirectly with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer having the crystal structure substantially of L21-type (Cu_2AlMn type).
9. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 6, wherein the underlayer is that of double-layer structure which consists of a first underlayer made of Cr and a second under-layer which is formed on the first underlayer containing at least one species of element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti.
10. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 6, which has an intermediate layer between the magnetic layer and the underlayer, said intermediate layer being made of a material containing Co and not less than 25 at.% Cr.
11. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer containing at least one species of element selected from Al, Cu, Rh, Pd, Ag, Ir, Pt, and Au in an amount not less than 70 at.% and having the (110) orientation.
12. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 11, wherein the orientation control layer substantially has the fcc crystal structure.
13. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon directly or indirectly with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them,

said orientation control layer having the crystal structure substantially of fcc type and the (110) orientation.

14. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 11, wherein the underlayer is that of double-layer structure which consists of a first underlayer made of Cr and a second underlayer which is formed on the first underlayer containing at least one species of element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti.

15. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 11, which has an intermediate layer between the magnetic layer and the underlayer, said intermediate layer being made of a material containing Co and not less than 25 at.% Cr.

16. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer having the B2 (CsCl) crystal structure incorporated with at least B.

17. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 16, in which the content of B in the orientation control layer is not less than 0.05 at.% and not more than 15 at.%.

18. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 16, in which the orientation control layer is made of an alloy whose principal component is at least one kind of alloy selected from A1-Co, A1-Fe, A1-Ni, A1-Pd, Co-Ga, Co-Fe, Co-Ti, Cu-Pd, Cu-Zn, Ga-Ni, Ga-Rh, and Ru-Si.

19. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 16, wherein the underlayer is that of double-layer structure which consists of a first underlayer made of Cr and a second underlayer which is formed on the first underlayer containing at least one species of element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti.

20. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 16, which has an intermediate layer between the magnetic layer and the underlayer, said intermediate layer being made of a material containing Co and not less than 25 at.% Cr.

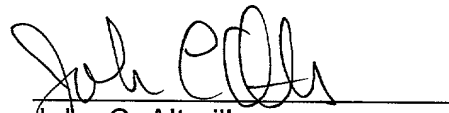
21. A magnetic storage device having a magnetic recording medium, a driver to turn said magnetic recording medium in the recording direction, a magnetic head consisting of a recording element and a read-back element, a means to move said magnetic head relative to said magnetic recording medium, and a record-read signal processing means to perform waveform processing on input signals to and output signals from said magnetic head, wherein said magnetic recording medium is the magnetic recording medium defined in Claim 1 and the read-back element of said magnetic head is that of magnetoresistive effect type.

REMARKS

The specification has been amended to conform the sub-headings to U.S. practice. Claims 11 and 13 have been amended as in response to a Written Opinion in the International phase and claims 4, 5, 9, 10, 14, 15, and 18-21 have been amended to delete the multiple dependencies. The attached sheets are captioned "**Version With Markings to Show Changes Made**". Examination in light of these amendments is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 29 August 2001


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Version With Markings to Show Changes Made

In the Specification:

The specification has been amended as follows:

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In the Claims:

The claims have been amended as follows:

1. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon directly or indirectly with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer containing at least Ti in an amount not less than 35 at.% and not more than 65 at.% and A1 in an amount not less than 35 at.% and not more than 65 at.%.
2. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 1, wherein the orientation control layer substantially has the L10-type (AuCu I-type) crystal structure.
3. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon directly or indirectly with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer having the crystal structure substantially of L10-type (AuCu I-type).
4. A magnetic recording medium as defined in [any of Claims 1 to 3] claim 1, wherein the underlayer is that of double-layer structure which consists of a first underlayer made of Cr and a second underlayer which is formed on the first

underlayer containing at least one species of element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti.

5. A magnetic recording medium as defined in [any of Claims 1 to 4] Claim 1, which has an intermediate layer between the magnetic layer and the underlayer, said intermediate layer being made of a material containing Co and not less than 25 at.% Cr.

6. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer containing at least one element selected from group A (consisting of Ni and Co) in an amount of from 30 at.% to 60 at.%, Al in an amount from 20 at.% to 30 at.%, and one element selected from group B (consisting of Ti and Zr) in an amount from 20 at.% to 30 at.%.

7. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 6, wherein the orientation control layer substantially has the L21type (Cu_2AlMn type) crystal structure.

8. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon directly or indirectly with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer having the crystal structure substantially of L21-type (Cu_2AlMn type).

9. A magnetic recording medium as defined in [any of Claims 6 to 8] Claim 6, wherein the underlayer is that of double-layer structure which consists of a first underlayer made of Cr and a second under-layer which is formed on the first underlayer containing at least one species of element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti.

10. A magnetic recording medium as defined in [any of Claims 6 to 9] Claim 6, which has an intermediate layer between the magnetic layer and the underlayer, said intermediate layer being made of a material containing Co and not less than 25 at.% Cr.

11. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer containing at least one species of element selected from Al, Cu, Rh, Pd, Ag, Ir, Pt, and Au in an amount not less than 70 at.% and having the (110) orientation.

12. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 11, wherein the orientation control layer substantially has the fcc crystal structure.

13. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon directly or indirectly with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer having the crystal structure substantially of fcc type and the (110) orientation.

14. A magnetic recording medium as defined in [any of Claims 11 to 13] Claim 11, wherein the underlayer is that of double-layer structure which consists of a first underlayer made of Cr and a second underlayer which is formed on the first underlayer containing at least one species of element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti.

15. A magnetic recording medium as defined in [any of Claims 11 to 14] Claim 11, which has an intermediate layer between the magnetic layer and the underlayer, said intermediate layer being made of a material containing Co and not less than 25 at.% Cr.

16. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer having the B2 (CsCl) crystal structure incorporated with at least B.

17. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 16, in which the content of B in the orientation control layer is not less than 0.05 at.% and not more than 15 at.%.

18. A magnetic recording medium as defined in [Claims 16 and 17] Claim 16, in which the orientation control layer is made of an alloy whose principal component is at least one kind of alloy selected from A1-Co, A1-Fe, A1-Ni, A1-Pd, Co-Ga, Co-Fe, Co-Ti, Cu-Pd, Cu-Zn, Ga-Ni, Ga-Rh, and Ru-Si.

19. A magnetic recording medium as defined in [any of Claims 16 to 18] Claim 16, wherein the underlayer is that of double-layer structure which consists of a first underlayer made of Cr and a second underlayer which is formed on the first underlayer containing at least one species of element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti.

20. A magnetic recording medium as defined in [any of Claims 16 to 19] Claim 16, which has an intermediate layer between the magnetic layer and the underlayer, said intermediate layer being made of a material containing Co and not less than 25 at.% Cr.

21. A magnetic storage device having a magnetic recording medium, a driver to turn said magnetic recording medium in the recording direction, a magnetic head consisting of a recording element and a read-back element, a means to move said magnetic head relative to said magnetic recording medium, and a record-read signal processing means to perform waveform processing on input signals to and output signals from said magnetic head, wherein said magnetic recording medium is the magnetic recording medium defined in [any of Claims 1 to 20] Claim 1 and the read-back element of said magnetic head is that of magnetoresistive effect type.

DESCRIPTION

MAGENTIC RECORDING MEDIUM AND MAGNETIC STORAGE DEVICE

Technical Field

1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029 2030 2031 2032 2033 2034 2035 2036 2037 2038 2039 2040 2041 2042 2043 2044 2045 2046 2047 2048 2049 2050 2051 2052 2053 2054 2055 2056 2057 2058 2059 2060 2061 2062 2063 2064 2065 2066 2067 2068 2069 2070 2071 2072 2073 2074 2075 2076 2077 2078 2079 2080 2081 2082 2083 2084 2085 2086 2087 2088 2089 2090 2091 2092 2093 2094 2095 2096 2097 2098 2099 2100 2101 2102 2103 2104 2105 2106 2107 2108 2109 2110 2111 2112 2113 2114 2115 2116 2117 2118 2119 2120 2121 2122 2123 2124 2125 2126 2127 2128 2129 2130 2131 2132 2133 2134 2135 2136 2137 2138 2139 2140 2141 2142 2143 2144 2145 2146 2147 2148 2149 2150 2151 2152 2153 2154 2155 2156 2157 2158 2159 2160 2161 2162 2163 2164 2165 2166 2167 2168 2169 2170 2171 2172 2173 2174 2175 2176 2177 2178 2179 2180 2181 2182 2183 2184 2185 2186 2187 2188 2189 2190 2191 2192 2193 2194 2195 2196 2197 2198 2199 2200 2201 2202 2203 2204 2205 2206 2207 2208 2209 2210 2211 2212 2213 2214 2215 2216 2217 2218 2219 2220 2221 2222 2223 2224 2225 2226 2227 2228 2229 2230 2231 2232 2233 2234 2235 2236 2237 2238 2239 2240 2241 2242 2243 2244 2245 2246 2247 2248 2249 2250 2251 2252 2253 2254 2255 2256 2257 2258 2259 2260 2261 2262 2263 2264 2265 2266 2267 2268 2269 2270 2271 2272 2273 2274 2275 2276 2277 2278 2279 2280 2281 2282 2283 2284 2285 2286 2287 2288 2289 2290 2291 2292 2293 2294 2295 2296 2297 2298 2299 2300 2301 2302 2303 2304 2305 2306 2307 2308 2309 2310 2311 2312 2313 2314 2315 2316 2317 2318 2319 2320 2321 2322 2323 2324 2325 2326 2327 2328 2329 2330 2331 2332 2333 2334 2335 2336 2337 2338 2339 2340 2341 2342 2343 2344 2345 2346 2347 2348 2349 2350 2351 2352 2353 2354 2355 2356 2357 2358 2359 2360 2361 2362 2363 2364 2365 2366 2367 2368 2369 2370 2371 2372 2373 2374 2375 2376 2377 2378 2379 2380 2381 2382 2383 2384 2385 2386 2387 2388 2389 2390 2391 2392 2393 2394 2395 2396 2397 2398 2399 2400 2401 2402 2403 2404 2405 2406 2407 2408 2409 2410 2411 2412 2413 2414 2415 2416 2417 2418 2419 2420 2421 2422 2423 2424 2425 2426 2427 2428 2429 2430 2431 2432 2433 2434 2435 2436 2437 2438 2439 2440 2441 2442 2443 2444 2445 2446 2447 2448 2449 2450 2451 2452 2453 2454 2455 2456 2457 2458 2459 2460 2461 2462 2463 2464 2465 2466 2467 2468 2469 2470 2471 2472 2473 2474 2475 2476 2477 2478 2479 2480 2481 2482 2483 2484 2485 2486 2487 2488 2489 2490 2491 2492 2493 2494 2495 2496 2497 2498 2499 2500 2501 2502 2503 2504 2505 2506 2507 2508 2509 2510 2511 2512 2513 2514 2515 2516 2517 2518 2519 2520 2521 2522 2523 2524 2525 2526 2527 2528 2529 2530 2531 2532 2533 2534 2535 2536 2537 2538 2539 2540 2541 2542 2543 2544 2545 2546 2547 2548 2549 2550 2551 2552 2553 2554 2555 2556 2557 2558 2559 2560 2561 2562 2563 2564 2565 2566 2567 2568 2569 2570 2571 2572 2573 2574 2575 2576 2577 2578 2579 2580 2581 2582 2583 2584 2585 2586 2587 2588 2589 2590 2591 2592 2593 2594 2595 2596 2597 2598 2599 2600 2601 2602 2603 2604 2605 2606 2607 2608 2609 2610 2611 2612 2613 2614 2615 2616 2617 2618 2619 2620 2621 2622 2623 2624 2625 2626 2627 2628 2629 2630 2631 2632 2633 2634 2635 2636 2637 2638 2639 2640 2641 2642 2643 2644 2645 2646 2647 2648 2649 2650 2651 2652 2653 2654 2655 2656 2657 2658 2659 2660 2661 2662 2663 2664 2665 2666 2667 2668 2669 2670 2671 2672 2673 2674 2675 2676 2677 2678 2679 2680 2681 2682 2683 2684 2685 2686 2687 2688 2689 2690 2691 2692 2693 2694 2695 2696 2697 2698 2699 2700 2701 2702 2703 2704 2705 2706 2707 2708 2709 2710 2711 2712 2713 2714 2715 2716 2717 2718 2719 2720 2721 2722 2723 2724 2725 2726 2727 2728 2729 2730 2731 2732 2733 2734 2735 2736 2737 2738 2739 2740 2741 2742 2743 2744 2745 2746 2747 2748 2749 2750 2751 2752 2753 2754 2755 2756 2757 2758 2759 2760 2761 2762 2763 2764 2765 2766 2767 2768 2769 2770 2771 2772 2773 2774 2775 2776 2777 2778 2779 2780 2781 2782 2783 2784 2785 2786 2787 2788 2789 2790 2791 2792 2793 2794 2795 2796 2797 2798 2799 2800 2801 2802 2803 2804 2805 2806 2807 2808 2809 2

Background Art

There has been a growing trend in recent years for magnetic disk devices to increase in capacity and recording density. The result is a continuing decrease in the size of recording bits formed on the magnetic recording medium. The currently available magnetic recording medium does not readily realize the ultra-high recording density exceeding 3 Gbit/in² without further reduction in medium noise. Therefore, it is important to make finer crystals constituting the magnetic film. Unfortunately, resulting fine magnetic crystals have such an extremely small volume that they decrease in recording magnetization by the strong influence of thermal energy even at normal temperature. In actuality, information recorded on a low-noise medium with a density of 115 kFCI is attenuated by more than 10% after 96 hours, as reported by Y. Hosoe et al. (IEEE Trans. Magn., 33, pp. 3028-3030, September 1997)

USP 5,693,426 discloses a magnetic recording medium which

consists of an orientation control layer having the B2 (CsCl) structure and a magnetic layer formed thereon directly or indirectly with a Cr underlayer interposed between them.

Japanese Patent Laid-open No. 21543/1995 discloses a dual underlayer consisting of a first one of Cr and a second one of CrMo alloy. According to this disclosure, the first Cr underlayer is formed directly on the substrate.

Disclosure of the Invention

A magnetic layer of hcp crystal structure formed on an underlayer of bcc crystal structure having (11.0) orientation. As the result, the axis of easy magnetization of the magnetic layer orients in the plane of the layer, and the magnetic layer takes on the crystal structure in which a plurality of magnetic crystal grains grow on a single crystal grain of the underlayer in such a way that the axes of easy magnetization intersect one another at right angles. The magnetic layer of crystal structure makes it difficult to control the grain size of crystals constituting the magnetic layer, and the resulting crystals have such an extremely small particle diameter that they are easily influenced by thermal fluctuation. The result is a decrease with time in read output. The magnetic layer of crystal structure hardly permits Cr to segregate at grain boundaries, which results in a strong mutual interaction between crystal grains constituting the magnetic layer. This in

turn leads to a decrease in effective anisotropy energy and coercive force. This phenomenon is conspicuous particularly in the region of the magnetic layer where magnetization is small, and it poses a serious problem if the product of residual magnetic flux and magnetic layer thickness is smaller than $70 \text{ G}\cdot\mu\text{m}$.

The magnetic layer should be free of crystal structure if it is to have good resistance to thermal fluctuation. One way to achieve this objective is by the (211) orientation of the Cr underlayer or the like which adjoins the magnetic layer and has the bcc structure. However, this is not practicable, because the Cr underlayer of bcc structure formed directly on the substrate by sputtering grows keeping the (110) plane (which is a closed packed plane) parallel to the substrate. The (100) orientation (which is a metastable plane) is achieved if the substrate temperature is raised so that particles adhering to the substrate are activated during sputtering. The (211) orientation needs such a higher particle energy that it hardly takes place preferentially.

The process in the above-cited USP 5,693,426 employs epitaxial growth to make the Cr underlayer having (211) orientation. To be more specific, the desired orientation is achieved by forming an orientation control layer (such as NiAl having the B2 crystal structure) on the substrate and growing the Cr underlayer thereon by epitaxial growth. The effect of this layer structure is appar-

ent as shown in Fig. 2. It is to be noted that the B2 orientation control layer, the Cr underlayer, and the magnetic layer are almost identical in the lattice spacing of their two-dimensional lattice. This lattice matching is important for the underlayer and the magnetic layer to have (211) orientation and (10.0) orientation, respectively.

As shown in Fig. 2, the B2 crystal structure of the orientation control layer is similar to the bcc structure, but the former differs from the latter in that the atom at the center of the body is different from the atoms at the corners of the cube. When formed by thin-film technology, the orientation control layer of B2 crystal structure varies in orientation depending on particle energy. If particle energy is low, (110) orientation appears, which is most stable as in the case of bcc crystal structure. By contrast, if particle energy is high, the (100) orientation does not take place unlike the bcc crystal structure but the (211) orientation takes place.

A probable reason for this is as follows. For a material of B2 crystal structure having (100) orientation, it is necessary that the first layer be composed of Ni atoms only and the second layer be composed of Al atoms only. This does not happen, however, in such a state that Ni and Al atoms reach the substrate all together. Therefore, the (100) orientation hardly takes place. In the case

of the (110) and (211) orientations, the two-dimensional lattice in each plane consists of unit cells (two-dimensional unit cells) in which the ratio of Ni atoms to Al atoms is 1:1. This ratio agrees with the target composition. Therefore, orientation control layer of B2 crystal structure has (110) orientation (the most stable plane) when particle energy is low; on the other hand, orientation control layer with B2 crystal structure has (211) orientation (the second most stable plane) when particle energy is high.

For reasons mentioned above, the magnetic disk medium disclosed in USP 5,693,426 is characterized by the magnetic layer which is composed of crystal grains of uni-crystalline-structure and hence has improved resistance to thermal fluctuation. Unfortunately, the magnetic layer of hcp crystal structure is composed of crystal grains whose c axis (the axis of easy magnetization) does not readily orient longitudinally. This leads to a low coercive force and a low resolution at the time of recording and reading. In addition, the underlayer has a large grain size, which makes the magnetic layer to have a large grain size. The large magnetic grain size increases media noise.

The present invention was completed to address the above-mentioned problems. It is a first object of the present invention to provide a low-noise longitudinal magnetic recording medium superior in resistance to thermal fluctuation. It is a second

object of the present invention to provide a magnetic storage device having a recording density exceeding 3 Gbit/in².

The above-mentioned objects are achieved when the magnetic layer is of uni-crystalline-structure and the magnetic layer is composed of fine crystal grains.

The present invention is directed to a magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon directly or indirectly with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer containing at least Ti in an amount not less than 35 at.% and not more than 65 at.% and Al in an amount not less than 35 at.% and not more than 65 at.%. According to a preferred embodiment, the above-mentioned orientation control layer substantially has the L10-type (AuCu I-type) crystal structure, so that the axis of easy magnetization orients longitudinally in the magnetic layer. The L10-type crystal structure resembles the fcc crystal structure except that the atom at the center of the side face differs from other atoms. Examples of the material having the L10 crystal structure include TiAl, NiZn, AuCu, FePd, and NiMn. TiAl is practicable judging from its phase diagram.

The present invention is directed also to a magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control

layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer containing at least one element selected from group A (consisting of Ni and Co) in an amount of from 30 at.% to 60 at.%, Al in an amount from 20 at.% to 30 at.%, and one element selected from group B (consisting of Ti and Zr) in an amount from 20 at.% to 30 at.%. According to a preferred embodiment, the above-mentioned orientation control layer substantially has the L21-type (Cu_2AlMn type) crystal structure, so that the axis of easy magnetization orients longitudinally in the magnetic layer. Like the B2 crystal structure, the L21 crystal structure consists of four cubes each characterized in that the atom at the center of the body differs from the atoms at the corners of the body. But unlike the B2 crystal structure, the L21 crystal structure has two kinds of body center atoms, so that adjoining cubes have different atoms at the body center. Examples of the material having the L21 crystal structure include Ni_2AlTi , Ni_2AlZr , Co_2AlTi , and Co_2AlZr .

The present invention is directed also to a magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer containing at least one species of

element selected from Al, Cu, Rh, Pd, Ag, Ir, Pt, and Au in an amount not less than 70 at.%. According to a preferred embodiment, the above-mentioned orientation control layer substantially has the fcc crystal structure, so that the axis of easy magnetization orients longitudinally in the magnetic layer.

The present invention is directed also to a magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer having the B2 (CsCl) crystal structure incorporated with at least B. According to a preferred embodiment, the amount of B to be added to the above-mentioned orientation control layer is not less than 0.05 at.% and not more than 15 at.%. The amount of B (not less than 0.05 at.% and not more than 15 at.%) is determined on the basis of the material having the B2-type crystal structure. The thus added B precipitates out at the grain boundary in the orientation control layer, thereby making crystal grains fine. In the case where the amount of B is comparatively large, B in the grain boundary exists together with metallic atoms contained in the orientation control layer having the B2 crystal structure. Such a region is amorphous and substantially crystalline grains decrease in particle diameter. So long as the crystalline portion in the orientation control layer retains sub-

stantially the B2 crystal structure, the (211) orientation of Cr or Cr alloy takes place as intended. In order that the crystalline portion retains the B2 crystal structure, it is necessary that the amount of B to be added should not exceed 15 at.%. In case of an excess amount, the axis of easy magnetization has a weak tendency toward longitudinal orientation in the magnetic layer. With an amount less than 0.05 at.%, B does not produce the effect of making crystal grains fine. The crystalline portion in the orientation control layer having the B2 (CsCl) structure should be composed of at least one kind of alloy selected from Al-Co, Al-Fe, Al-Ni, Al-Pd, Co-Ga, Co-Fe, Co-Ti, Cu-Pd, Cu-Zn, Ga-Ni, Ga-Rh, and Ru-Si. This is desirable for the (211) orientation to take place in the Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer which is formed on the orientation control layer.

It was confirmed that X-ray diffraction by θ -2 θ scan method detects in the magnetic layer the (10.0) plane parallel to the substrate but does not detect in the magnetic layer the (11.0) plane parallel to the substrate. (There is an instance in which the magnetic layer has a small number of (00.2) and (10.1) planes.) The foregoing suggests that the orientation control layer interposed between the substrate and the underlayer changes not only the plane of preferred orientation in the underlayer but also the fine structure in the magnetic layer.

The above-mentioned magnetic layer should preferably contain Cr in an amount not less than 15 at.% and not more than 25 at.% and Pt in an amount not less than 4 at.% and not more than 25 at.%, so that the recording medium has a high coercive force and a low noise level. The magnetic layer may be incorporated with Ta, Ti, and Nb for further noise reduction. In this case the total amount of these elements should not exceed 8 at.% so that the magnetic layer will not become non-magnetic. Of the components constituting the magnetic layer, Co should account for not less than 62 at.%. Otherwise, the residual magnetic flux density remarkably decreases and the magnetic flux leaking from the recording medium decreases, making it difficult for the magnetic head to read signals.

Epitaxial growth of the magnetic layer of hcp structure on the underlayer of bcc structure causes crystals of different structure to grow forcibly. Therefore, it gives defects or forms fine magnetic crystal grains in the initial stage of crystal growth in the magnetic layer. Such defects and fine crystal grains are readily subject to thermal fluctuation and hence they cause the read output to decrease with time at a faster rate after signal recording. In order to minimize such adverse effects, it is desirable to interpose a non-magnetic interlayer of hcp structure between the underlayer and the magnetic layer. This interlayer absorbs defects and fine particles that occur at the interface with

the underlayer of bcc structure and hence it protects the magnetic layer from adverse effects. The non-magnetic interlayer of hcp structure should preferably be formed from a Co-based material containing at least Cr in an amount not less than 25 at.%.

The present invention is directed also to a magnetic storage device having a magnetic recording medium, a driver to turn said magnetic recording medium in the recording direction, a magnetic head consisting of a recording element and a read-back element, a means to move said magnetic head relative to said magnetic recording medium, and a record-read signal processing means to perform waveform processing on input signals to and output signals from said magnetic head, wherein said magnetic recording medium is any one of the magnetic recording media mentioned above and the read-back element of said magnetic head is that of magnetoresistive effect type. The magnetic storage device has a recording density more than 3 Gbit/in².

Brief Description of the Drawings

Fig. 1 is a diagram showing the model of the crystal structure of the orientation control layer having the L10-type crystal structure according to the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a diagram showing the epitaxial relation in the magnetic recording medium having the orientation control layer of B2-type crystal structure.

Fig. 3 is a schematic sectional view showing the magnetic recording medium in one example of the present invention.

Fig. 4 is a schematic diagram showing the structure of the magnetic head provided with an element that utilizes the magnetoresistive effect.

Fig. 5 is a diagram showing the structure of the magnetoresistive sensor.

Fig. 6 is a diagram showing the structure of the magnetoresistive sensor of spin valve type.

Fig. 7 is a schematic diagram showing the magnetic storage device.

Fig. 8 is a diagram showing the magnetic properties and media noise in Example 1 compared with those in Comparative Example 1.

Fig. 9 is a diagram showing the diffraction intensity of the (10.0) plane of the magnetic layer in Example 1 compared with that in Comparative Example 1.

Fig. 10 is a diagram showing the magnetic properties and media noise in Example 2 compared with those in Comparative Example 2.

Fig. 11 is a diagram showing the diffraction intensity of the (10.0) plane of the magnetic layer in Example 2 compared with that in Comparative Example 2.

Fig. 12 is a diagram showing the model of the crystal struc-

ture of the orientation control layer having the L21-type crystal structure according to the present invention.

Fig. 13 is a diagram showing the magnetic properties and media noise in Example 3 compared with those in Comparative Example 3.

Fig. 14 is a diagram showing the diffraction intensity of the (10.0) plane of the magnetic layer in Example 3 compared with that in Comparative Example 3.

Fig. 15 is a diagram showing the model of the crystal structure of the orientation control layer having the fcc-type crystal structure according to the present invention.

Fig. 16 is a diagram showing the magnetic properties and media noise in Example 4 compared with those in Comparative Example 4.

Fig. 17 is a diagram showing the diffraction intensity of the (10.0) plane of the magnetic layer in Example 4 compared with that in Comparative Example 4.

Fig. 18 is a diagram showing how media noise varies depending on the B content in the magnetic recording medium according to the present invention.

Best Mode for Carrying out the Invention

The invention will be described in more detail with reference to the following examples.

Example 1

This example demonstrates a magnetic disk of the present invention which is shown in section in Fig. 3. This magnetic disk was produced in the following manner.

A glass substrate 30 (65 mm in outside diameter) was covered with an orientation control layer 31 (and 31') of Ti-50at.% Al (100 nm thick) by DC magnetron sputtering under the condition that the substrate temperature is 270°C, the Ar gas pressure is 2.0 mTorr, and the input power density is 0.7 W/cm². On the orientation control layer were sequentially formed a first underlayer 32 (and 32') of Cr (20 nm thick), a second underlayer 33 (and 33') of Cr-30at.% Mo (20 nm thick), a magnetic layer 34 (and 34') of Co-20at.% Cr-12at.% Pt-1.5at.% Ti (20 nm thick), and a protective layer 35 (and 35') of C (5 nm thick) under the same condition as mentioned above. The number preceding each element represents the content of the relevant element.

In Comparative Example 1, a magnetic disk was prepared in the same way as in Example 1 except that the orientation control layer 31 (and 31') of Ti-50at.% Al was replaced by that of Ni-50at.% Al. The orientation control layer in Example 1 had the L10 crystal structure, whereas that in Comparative Example 1 had the B2 crystal structure.

Fig. 8 shows the in-plane magnetic properties and media noise

in Example 1 and Comparative Example 1. The value of media noise is that which was measured for signals recorded at 250 kFCI. The value in Example 1 is unity and the value in Comparative Example 1 is relative to unity. It is noted that the magnetic disk in Example 1 is higher in coercive force (H_c) and lower in media noise than that in Comparative Example 1. It is also noted that the magnetic disk in Example 1 is higher in coercivity squareness (S^*) than that in Comparative Example 1. This suggests a better resolution.

The CoCrPt magnetic layer was tested for diffraction intensity at the (10.0) plane by X-ray diffraction. The results are shown in Fig. 9. The value in Example 1 is unity and the value in Comparative Example 1 is relative to unity. The larger the value, the more the axis of easy magnetization orients in the plane of the magnetic layer. It is understood that the diffraction intensity is higher and there are more magnetic particles whose axis of easy magnetization orients in the plane in Example 1 than in Comparative Example 1.

The CoCrPt magnetic layer of the magnetic disk in both Example 1 and Comparative Example 1 does not give diffraction due to the (11.0) plane. This suggests that the crystal grains in the magnetic layer has the uni-crystalline-structure.

Incorporation of 10at.% B into the orientation control layer

of the magnetic disk in Example 1 reduced media noise by 10%. A probable reason for this is that B in the orientation control layer segregates in grain boundaries, thereby making crystal grains fine.

Examples of materials having the L10 crystal structure include TiAl, NiZn, AuCu, FePd, and NiMn. Of these examples, TiAl is practical judging from its phase diagram.

In this example, the orientation control layer of L10 structure must cause the Cr underlayer formed thereon to have the (211) orientation. To this end, it is necessary that the (101) and (011) oriented orientation control layer, as shown in Fig. 1. Since the L10 structure is tetragonal, (110) is not equivalent to (101) and (011). The (110) orientation gives the two dimensional lattice structure in which each layer consists of identical atoms or the first layer consists only of Ti atoms and the second layer consists only of Al atoms. Such orientation, however, hardly occurs under the condition that Ti atoms and Al atoms reach the substrate all together. On the other hand, in the case of the (101) or (011) orientation, the ratio of atoms constituting the two dimensional lattice agrees with the ratio of atoms constituting the unit cell and the target composition. Such orientation easily occurs as desired.

The lattice spacing of the two-dimensional lattice resulting from the orientation control layer of L10 structure which has (101)

or (011) orientation is almost identical with that resulting from the (211) oriented Cr underlayer and the (10.0) oriented magnetic layer. Therefore, the Cr underlayer epitaxially grows with having (211) orientation and the magnetic layer epitaxially grows with having the (10.0) orientation. For this reason, the crystal grains of the magnetic layer are of uni-crystalline-structure and the recording medium thus obtained has good resistance to thermal fluctuation.

The orientation control layer of L10 crystal structure should preferably contain Ti and Al in an atomic ratio of 1:1. The preferred layer composition is such that the content of Ti is not less than 35 at.% and not more than 65 at.% and the content of Al is not less than 35 at.% and not more than 65 at.%. The orientation control layer of L10 structure which is actually obtained by sputtering has a composition which is slightly different from the target composition. Thus the L10 crystal structure will have some defects and disorders. However, this is not a serious problem.

As mentioned above, the orientation control layer is formed from a material of L10 crystal structure, such as TiAl, NiZn, AuCu, FePd, and NiMn. These materials may be incorporated with any other element in an amount not more than 30 at.%, such that the added element precipitates out in the grain boundaries. This is one way to make fine the crystal grains of L10 structure. Since precipita-

tion of the added element in the grain boundaries forms an amorphous region, the crystal grains of L10 structure do not prevent Cr from the (211) orientation. Incorporation with B is particularly effective, because B easily segregates in the grain boundaries, thereby making fine crystal grains in the orientation control layer. The result is that the magnetic layer formed on the orientation control layer is composed of fine crystal grains, which contributes to noise reduction. The kind of the added element is not specifically restricted so long as the crystal grains in the orientation control layer retain the L10 structure so that the desired effect is produced. In order that the crystal grains retain the L10 structure, it is necessary that the amount of the added element be not more than 30 at.% of the total composition of the orientation control layer.

In this example, the orientation control layer is composed of the crystal grains of L10 structure which contains a large amount of Ti. Ti makes the crystal grains fine. The result is that the magnetic layer formed on the orientation control layer is composed of fine crystal grains and hence the resulting magnetic disk has a low noise level.

In this example, a mention was made of the magnetic disk in which the Cr underlayer is interposed between the magnetic layer and the orientation control layer of L10 structure. However, the

construction of the magnetic disk may be modified such that the magnetic layer is formed directly on the orientation control layer of L10 structure. This poses no problem in view of the fact that the two-dimensional lattice of the magnetic layer and the two-dimensional lattice of the orientation control layer of L10 structure have almost the same lattice spacing, as shown in Fig. 1. However, in the case where the Cr underlayer is not formed, the axis of easy magnetization has a slightly weak tendency toward in-plane orientation in the magnetic layer. This leads to a decrease in coercive force and an increase in noise level.

For the magnetic recording medium to have a high coercive force and a low noise level, it is common practice to incorporate the magnetic layer with such an element as Pt, Ta, Ti, and Nb. Incorporation with such an element causes the magnetic layer of hcp structure to have a larger lattice constant and the two-dimension lattice formed by the (10.0) plane of the magnetic layer has a larger lattice spacing. The result is poor lattice matching between the magnetic layer and the orientation control layer of L10 structure and poor lattice matching between the magnetic layer and the Cr underlayer. Therefore, the underlayer should be made of an alloy having a large lattice constant. Such an alloy is exemplified by those of Cr-Ti (5-50 at.%), Cr-Mo (5-100 at.%), and Cr-Mo-Ti. The underlayer made of any of these alloys improves the in-

plane orientation of the axis of easy orientation of the magnetic layer. It is important that the underlayer have the bcc crystal structure. The Cr-Mo alloy used for the alloy underlayer is a homogeneous solid solution as indicated by its phase diagram for bulk metal and hence it has always the bcc crystal structure. This property makes it easy to produce crystals having any desired lattice spacing. The Cr-Ti alloy gives an underlayer consisting of fine crystal grains and hence the magnetic layer formed thereon also consists of fine crystal grains. This is desirable for noise reduction. However, the Cr-Ti alloy for the underlayer should contain a limited amount of Ti not exceeding 50 at.% because Ti has the hcp crystal structure. The underlayer made of Cr-Mo-Ti alloy has the property derived from respective properties of Cr-Mo alloy and Cr-Ti alloy in proportion to the content of each element. The alloy for the underlayer may contain any of Nb, Ta, and W in place of Cr, Mo, and Ti (although the resulting alloy is slightly inferior to the alloy containing Cr, Mo, and Ti). Other elements than mentioned above should not be used because they disturb crystal orientation and give rise to large crystal grains, which leads to a decrease in coercive force and an increase in noise.

According to a preferred embodiment, the underlayer is of double-layer structure, with the first layer containing Cr and the second layer which is formed on the first underlayer containing at

least one element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti. This underlayer is desirable because it permits the axis of easy magnetization to assume in-plane orientation in the magnetic layer. The results of the present inventors' experiments indicate the following. If the Cr alloy underlayer is formed directly on the orientation control layer of L10 structure, lattice matching between them is poor and hence the crystal orientation in the underlayer as well as the magnetic layer is poor, because the two-dimensional lattice of the former has a much larger lattice spacing than that of the latter. This problem was solved by replacing the underlayer with that of double-layer structure which consists of a first layer of Cr (adjacent to the orientation control layer of L10 structure) and a second layer which has a larger lattice constant than Cr.

The magnetic recording medium in Example 1 exhibits its full performance when it works together with a magnetic head provided with a sensor (for read only) that utilizes the magnetoresistive effect. An example of the magnetic head is shown in Fig. 4.

The magnetic head consists of a write head and a read head. The write head is that of thin-film induction type consisting of a pair of recording magnetic poles 40 and 41 and a coil 42. The read head is a magnetoresistive head consisting of a magnetic pole 41 (which functions also as a magnetic shield for the read head), a

magnetic shield layer 45 facing the magnetic pole 41, a magnetoresistive sensor 43, and a conductor layer 44 (which functions as an electrode). There is a 0.3- μm gap layer between the recording magnetic poles. Both the magnetic pole 41 and the magnetic shield 45 are 1 μm thick, and the gap between them is 0.25 μm . The magnetic head is mounted on the magnetic head slider base 46. Incidentally, there are not shown in Fig. 4 the gap layer between the shield layer and the magnetoresistive sensor and the gap layer between the recording magnetic poles.

Fig. 5 is an enlarged sectional view showing the structure of the magnetoresistive sensor 43 in detail. There is shown a signal sensing region 50, which has sloped parts 55. The magnetoresistive sensor 43 consists of a gap layer of aluminum oxide, a transverse bias layer 52, a separating layer 53, and a magnetoresistive ferromagnetic layer 54, which are sequentially formed on top of the other. The magnetoresistive ferromagnetic layer 54 is an NiFe alloy (20 nm thick). The NiFe alloy may be replaced with a ferromagnetic alloy, such as NiFeRh, which has a comparatively high electrical resistance and good soft magnetic properties. The transverse bias layer 52 is magnetized by the magnetic field produced by the sense current flowing through the magnetoresistive ferromagnetic layer 54. Magnetization takes place in the in-plane direction (longitudinal direction) perpendicular to the sense

current. Thus the transverse bias layer 52 applies a bias magnetic field to the magnetoresistive ferromagnetic layer 54 in the transverse direction. In this way the magnetoresistive sensor produces a read output which is linear for the leakage flux from the magnetic disk. The separating layer 53 prevents the sense current from the magnetoresistive ferromagnetic layer 54 from shunting. It is made of Ta having a comparatively high electrical resistance, and it is 5 nm thick. The sloped part 55 of the magnetoresistive sensor 43 is covered with a permanent magnet layer 56 and an electrode 57. The former makes the magnetoresistive ferromagnetic layer 54 a single domain, and the latter leads out signals. The permanent magnetic layer 56 should have a high coercive force and invariably keep its direction of magnetization. It is made of CoCr alloy or CoCrPt alloy. For a larger output, the magnetoresistive sensor 43 should preferably be that of spin valve type as shown in Fig. 6. It consists of a signal sensing region 60 and sloped parts 67, which are of laminate structure. The laminate consists of a gap layer 61 of aluminum oxide, a Ta buffer layer 62 (5 nm thick), a first magnetic layer 63 (7 nm thick), a Cu intermediate layer 64 (1.5 nm thick), a second magnetic layer 65 (3 nm thick), and an antiferromagnetic layer 66 of Fe-50at.% Mn alloy (10 nm thick), which are formed on top of the other. The first magnetic layer 63 is made of Ni-20at.% Fe alloy and the second magnetic layer 65 is

made of Co. The second magnetic layer 65 is magnetized in one fixed direction by the exchange field from the antiferromagnetic alloy layer 66. By contrast, the first magnetic layer 63 (which is in contact with the second magnetic layer 65 with a non-magnetic interlayer 64 interposed between them) varies in the direction of magnetization depending on the leakage field from the magnetic recording medium. As the two magnetic layers magnetize in different directions, the three layers (the first magnetic layer 63, the intermediate layer 64, and the second magnetic layer 65) as a whole changes in resistance. This phenomenon is called spin valve effect. Incidentally, as in the ordinary magnetoresistive sensor shown in Fig. 5, a permanent magnet layer 68 and an electrode 69 to lead out signals are formed on the sloped part 67. The magnetic head in this example is that of spin valve type which has the magnetoresistive sensor⁴³ utilizing the spin valve effect as shown in Fig. 6.

Fig. 7 shows a magnetic storage device consisting of the magnetic disk and magnetic head demonstrated in this example. Fig. 7(a) is a top view and Fig. 7(b) is a schematic sectional view taken in the direction of the arrows along the line A-A'.

There is shown a magnetic disk 70, which is a longitudinal magnetic recording medium. A plurality of magnetic disks are supported on a shaft connected to a disk driver 71. Each face of the magnetic disk is swept by the magnetic head 72 which is shown

in Fig. 4. The magnetic head 72 is moved to a desired track by the magnetic head driver 73 in such a way that the flying height is not more than $0.05\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ and the head positioning accuracy is not more than $0.5\text{ }\mu\text{m}$. The magnetic head 72 reproduces signals, which subsequently undergo waveform processing by the reproduced signal processing unit 74. The reproduced signal processing unit 74 consists of an amplifier, analog equalizer, AD converter, digital equalizer, and maximum likelihood decoder. The analog equalizer fixes and restores the reproduced waveforms. (In reproduction by the magnetic head that utilizes the magnetoresistive effect, reproduced waveforms may be asymmetrical for positive and negative values on account of the characteristic properties of the magnetic head or different from those of recorded signals on account of the frequency characteristics of the write-read system. Such waveforms lead to erratic signal reading.) The restored waveforms are further fixed by the AD converter for digital conversion and the digital equalizer. The signals restored in this manner are finally decoded by the maximum likelihood decoder. The reproduced signal processing unit constructed as mentioned above writes and reads signals at an extremely low error rate. Incidentally, the equalizer and maximum likelihood decoder may be any existing ones.

Owing to the above-mentioned construction, the magnetic storage device in this example has a recording density exceeding 3

Gbit/in². The recording density is three times higher than that of the conventional magnetic storage device. The magnetic storage device keeps more than twice the recording density of the conventional magnetic storage device even when the maximum likelihood decoder in the recording-reproducing signal processing unit is replaced with an existing waveform discriminator.

What is mentioned above in this example is about the magnetic disk medium and the magnetic storage device provided with it. Needless to say, the present invention can be applied to magnetic recording media in any form (such as tape and card having a magnetic layer on one side) and a magnetic storage device provided with such a magnetic recording medium.

No specific restrictions are imposed on the method of producing the magnetic disk media. The above-mentioned DC magnetron sputtering may be replaced with any of ECR sputtering, ion beam sputtering, vacuum deposition, plasma CVD, coating, plating, etc.

Example 2

This example demonstrates another magnetic disk whose construction and manufacturing process are explained in the following.

As in Example 1 shown in Fig. 3, a glass substrate 30 (65 mm in outside diameter) was covered with an orientation control layer 31 (and 31') of Ni-25at.% Al-25at.% Ti (100 nm thick) by DC magnetron sputtering under the condition that the substrate temperature

is 270°C, the Ar gas pressure is 2.0 mTorr, and the input power density is 0.7 W/cm². On the orientation control layer were sequentially formed a first underlayer 32 (and 32') of Cr (20 nm thick), a second underlayer 33 (and 33') of Cr-30at.% Mo (20 nm thick), a magnetic layer 34 (and 34') of Co-20at.% Cr-12at.% Pt-1.5at.% Ti (20 nm thick), and a protective layer 35 (and 35') of C (5 nm thick) under the same condition as mentioned above. The number preceding each element represents the content of the relevant element.

In Comparative Example 2, a magnetic disk was prepared in the same way as in Example 2 except that the orientation control layer 31 (and 31') of Ni-25at.% Al-25at.% Ti was replaced by that of Ni-50at.% Al. The orientation control layer in Example 2 had the L21 crystal structure, whereas that in Comparative Example 2 had the B2 crystal structure.

Fig. 10 shows the in-plane magnetic properties and media noise in Example 2 and Comparative Example 2. The value of media noise is that which was measured for signals recorded at 250 kFCI. The value in Example 2 is unity and the value in Comparative Example 2 is relative to unity. It is noted that the magnetic disk in Example 2 is higher in coercive force (H_c) and lower in media noise than that in Comparative Example 2. It is also noted that the magnetic disk in Example 2 is higher in coercivity squareness (S^*)

than that in Comparative Example 2. This suggests a better resolution.

The CoCrPt magnetic layer was tested for diffraction intensity at the (10.0) plane by X-ray diffraction. The results are shown in Fig. 11. The value in Example 2 is unity and the value in Comparative Example 2 is relative to unity. The larger the value, the more the axis of easy magnetization orients in the plane of the magnetic layer. It is understood that the diffraction intensity is higher and there are more magnetic particles whose axis of easy magnetization orients in the plane in Example 2 than in Comparative Example 2.

The CoCrPt magnetic layer of the magnetic disk in both Example 2 and Comparative Example 2 does not give diffraction due to the (11.0) plane. This suggests that the crystal grains in the magnetic layer has the uni-crystalline-structure.

Experiments with the orientation control layer 31 (and 31') in which the alloy was replaced with Ni-25at.% Al-25at.% Zr, Co-25% Al-25at.% Ti, or Co-25at.% Al-25at.% Zr gave better results than in Comparative Example 2. It was found that the magnetic recording medium in which the orientation control layer contains Ti and has the L21 structure is about 10% lower in media noise than that in which the orientation control layer contains Zr and has the L21 structure. By contrast, it was also found that the magnetic re-

cording medium in which the orientation control layer contains Zr and has the L21 structure has 10-20% higher coercive force. In addition, incorporation of 10at.% B into the orientation control layer of the magnetic disk in Example 2 reduced media noise by 10%. A probable reason for this is that B in the orientation control layer segregates in grain boundaries, thereby making crystal grains fine.

Like the B2 crystal structure, the L21 crystal structure consists of four cubes each characterized in that the atom at the center of the body differs from the atoms at the corners of the body. But unlike the B2 crystal structure, the L21 crystal structure has two kinds of body center atoms, so that adjoining cubes have different atoms at the body center. Examples of the material having the L21 crystal structure include Ni_2AlTi , Ni_2AlZr , Co_2AlTi , and Co_2AlZr . The subscript number following the element symbol denotes the ratio of atoms contained in the unit cell. For example, Ni_2AlTi indicates that the unit cell consists of eight atoms of Ni and four atoms each of Al and Ti. Thus the ratio of atoms is $\text{Ni:Al:Ti} = 2:1:1$.

In this example, the orientation control layer of L21 structure must cause the Cr underlayer formed thereon to have the (211) orientation. To this end, it is necessary that the (211) oriented orientation control layer like the orientation control layer of B2

structure. As shown in Fig. 1, when the orientation control layer of L21 structure has the (211) orientation, the ratio of atoms constituting the two-dimensional lattice agrees with that of the target composition and that of the unit cell. Thus, the (211) orientation readily takes place as in the case of the orientation control layer of B2 structure. When the orientation control layer of L21 structure has the (211) orientation, the lattice spacing of the two-dimensional lattice is almost equal to that of the Cr underlayer (which has the (211) orientation as shown in Fig. 12) and the magnetic layer which has the (10.0) orientation. Therefore, the Cr underlayer epitaxially grows with having the (211) orientation and the magnetic layer epitaxially grows with having the (10.0) orientation. The resulting magnetic layer consists of crystal grains of uni-crystalline-structure, and this makes the magnetic recording medium to have good resistance to thermal fluctuation.

The orientation control layer of L21 crystal structure should preferably contain Ni or Co, Al, and Ti or Zr in an atomic ratio of 2:1:1. The preferred layer composition is such that the content of Ni or Co is 30 to 60 at.%, the content of Al is 20 to 30 at.%, and the content of Ti or Zr is 20 to 30 at.%. The orientation control layer actually obtained by sputtering has a composition which is slightly different from the target composition. Thus the L21

crystal structure will have some defects and disorders. However, this is not a serious problem.

The material having the L21 crystal structure may be incorporated with any other element in an amount not more than 30 at.%, such that the added element precipitates out in the grain boundaries. This is one way to make fine the crystal grains. Since precipitation of the added element in the grain boundaries forms an amorphous region, the crystal grains do not prevent Cr from the (211) orientation. The kind of the added element is not specifically restricted so long as the crystal grains in the orientation control layer retain the L21 structure so that the desired effect is produced. In order that the crystal grains retain the L21 structure, it is necessary that the amount of the added element be not more than 30 at.% of the total composition of the orientation control layer. Incorporation with B is particularly effective in noise reduction, because B easily segregates in the grain boundaries, thereby making fine crystal grains in the orientation control layer. The above-mentioned material of L21 structure for the orientation control layer contains either Ti or Zr. Ti or Zr makes the crystal grains fine, which leads to the recording medium having a low noise level. Ti is particularly effective in grain refinement and noise reduction. By contrast, Zr is also effective in grain refinement and noise reduction but is particularly effective in the (211)

orientation of Cr and in increasing the read output.

In this example, a mention was made of the magnetic disk in which the Cr underlayer is interposed between the magnetic layer and the orientation control layer of L21 structure. However, the construction of the magnetic disk may be modified such that the magnetic layer is formed directly on the orientation control layer of L21 structure. This poses no problem in view of the fact that the two-dimensional lattice of the magnetic layer and the two-dimensional lattice of the orientation control layer of L21 structure have almost the same lattice spacing, as shown in Fig. 12. However, in the case where the Cr underlayer is not formed, the axis of easy magnetization has a slightly weak tendency toward in-plane orientation in the magnetic layer. This leads to a decrease in coercive force and an increase in noise level.

For the magnetic recording medium to have a high coercive force and a low noise level, it is common practice to incorporate the magnetic layer with such an element as Pt, Ta, Ti, and Nb. Incorporation with such an element causes the magnetic layer of hcp structure to have a larger lattice constant and the two-dimension lattice formed by the (10.0) plane of the magnetic layer has a larger lattice spacing. (The lattice constant of Co is shown in Fig. 2.) The result is poor lattice matching between the magnetic layer and the orientation control layer of L21 structure and poor

lattice matching between the magnetic layer and the Cr underlayer. Therefore, the underlayer should be made of an alloy having a large lattice constant. Such an alloy is exemplified by those of Cr-Ti (5-50 at.%), Cr-Mo (5-100 at.%), and Cr-Mo-Ti. The underlayer made of any of these alloys improves the in-plane orientation of the axis of easy orientation of the magnetic layer. It is important that the underlayer have the bcc crystal structure. The Cr-Mo alloy used for the alloy underlayer is a homogeneous solid solution as indicated by its phase diagram for bulk metal and hence it has always the bcc crystal structure. This property makes it easy to produce crystals having any desired lattice spacing. The Cr-Ti alloy gives an underlayer consisting of fine crystal grains and hence the magnetic layer formed thereon also consists of fine crystal grains. This is desirable for noise reduction. However, the Cr-Ti alloy for the underlayer should contain a limited amount of Ti not exceeding 50 at.% because Ti has the hcp crystal structure. The underlayer made of Cr-Mo-Ti alloy has the property derived from respective properties of Cr-Mo alloy and Cr-Ti alloy in proportion to the content of each element. The alloy for the underlayer may contain any of Nb, Ta, and W in place of Cr, Mo, and Ti (although the resulting alloy is slightly inferior to the alloy containing Cr, Mo, and Ti). Other elements than mentioned above should not be used because they disturb crystal orientation and

give rise to large crystal grains, which leads to a decrease in coercive force and an increase in noise.

According to a preferred embodiment, the underlayer is of double-layer structure, with the first layer containing Cr and the second layer which is formed on the first underlayer containing at least one element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti. This underlayer is desirable because it permits the axis of easy magnetization to assume in-plane orientation in the magnetic layer. The results of the present inventors' experiments indicate the following. If the Cr alloy underlayer is formed directly on the orientation control layer of L21 structure, lattice matching between them is poor and hence the crystal orientation in the underlayer as well as the magnetic layer is poor, because the two-dimensional lattice of the former has a much larger lattice spacing than that of the latter. This problem was solved by replacing the underlayer with that of double-layer structure which consists of a first layer of Cr (adjacent to the orientation control layer of L21 structure) and a second layer which has a larger lattice constant than Cr.

The magnetic disk in this example is combined with the magnetic head shown in Fig. 6 to form the magnetic storage device as shown in Fig. 7. The magnetic head is that of spin valve type provided with a magnetoresistive sensor which utilizes the spin

valve effect. Owing to the above-mentioned construction, the magnetic storage device in this example has a recording density exceeding 3 Gbit/in². The recording density is three times higher than that of the conventional magnetic storage device. The magnetic storage device keeps more than twice the recording density of the conventional magnetic storage device even when the maximum likelihood decoder in the recording-reproducing signal processing unit is replaced with an existing waveform discriminator.

Example 3

This example demonstrates another magnetic disk whose construction and manufacturing process are explained in the following.

As in Example 1 shown in Fig. 3, a glass substrate 30 (65 mm in outside diameter) was covered with an orientation control layer 31 (and 31') of Au (100 nm thick) by DC magnetron sputtering under the condition that the substrate temperature is 270°C, the Ar gas pressure is 2.0 mTorr, and the input power density is 0.7 W/cm². On the orientation control layer were sequentially formed a first underlayer 32 (and 32') of Cr (20 nm thick), a second underlayer 33 (and 33') of Cr-30at.% Mo (20 nm thick), a magnetic layer 34 (and 34') of Co-20at.% Cr-12at.% Pt-1.5at.% Ti (20 nm thick), and a protective layer 35 (and 35') of C (5 nm thick) under the same condition as mentioned above. The number preceding each element represents the content of the relevant element.

In Comparative Example 3, a magnetic disk was prepared in the same way as in Example 3 except that the orientation control layer 31 (and 31') of Au was replaced by that of Ni-50at.% Al. The orientation control layer in Example 3 had the fcc crystal structure, whereas that in Comparative Example 3 had the B2 crystal structure.

Fig. 13 shows the in-plane magnetic properties and media noise in Example 3 and Comparative Example 3. The value of media noise is that which was measured for signals recorded at 250 kFCI. The value in Example 3 is unity and the value in Comparative Example 3 is relative to unity. It is noted that the magnetic disk in Example 3 is higher in coercive force (H_c) and lower in media noise than that in Comparative Example 3. It is also noted that the magnetic disk in Example 3 is higher in coercivity squareness (S^*) than that in Comparative Example 3. This suggests a better resolution.

The CoCrPt magnetic layer was tested for diffraction intensity at the (10.0) plane by X-ray diffraction. The results are shown in Fig. 14. The value in Example 3 is unity and the value in Comparative Example 3 is relative to unity. The larger the value, the more the axis of easy magnetization orients in the plane of the magnetic layer. It is understood that the diffraction intensity is higher and there are more magnetic particles whose axis of easy

magnetization orients in the plane in Example 3 than in Comparative Example 3.

The CoCrPt magnetic layer of the magnetic disk in both Example 3 and Comparative Example 3 does not give diffraction due to the (11.0) plane. This suggests that the crystal grains in the magnetic layer has the uni-crystalline-structure.

Experiments with the orientation control layer in which Au was replaced with Al, Cu, Rh, Pd, Ag, Ir, or Pt, or an alloy thereof gave the same result as mentioned above.

In this example, the orientation control layer must cause the Cr underlayer formed thereon to have (211) orientation. To this end, it is necessary that the (110) oriented orientation control layer as shown in Fig. 15. When the orientation control layer has (110) orientation, the lattice spacing in the two-dimensional lattice approximately agrees with that of the (211) oriented Cr underlayer. Thus, the Cr underlayer epitaxially grows in the (211) orientation and the magnetic layer also epitaxially grows in the (10.0) orientation. The resulting magnetic layer is composed of crystal grains of uni-crystalline-structure and hence the magnetic recording medium has good resistance to thermal fluctuation.

The orientation control layer should have a composition which contains at least one element selected from Al, Cu, Rh, Pd, Ag, Ir, Pt, and Au in an amount not less than 70 at.%. All of these ele-

ments have the fcc structure in the form of simple substance. Their alloys usually form homogeneous solid solution, but they still substantially have the fcc structure. For reference, Table 15 shows the size of the two-dimensional lattice in the longitudinal direction (a) and the lateral direction ($\sqrt{2}a/2$), where a denotes the length of the side of the cube. It is noted that all the elements have the value close to the lattice spacing of the two-dimensional lattice of the underlayer. In the case where any other element than listed above is added, its content should be not more than 30 at.% so that it does not disturb the crystal structure. Such an additional element improves the lattice matching with the Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer or makes fine the crystal grains. According to the present invention, the underlayer has (211) orientation by epitaxial growth thanks to the fact that both the (110) plane of the orientation control layer and the Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer formed thereon have the two-dimensional lattice with an almost equal lattice spacing. Therefore, so long as the orientation control layer substantially has the fcc structure, the effect of the present invention is produced, and hence it is permissible to add any other element (in an amount not more than 30 at.%) than Al, Cu, Rh, Pd, Ag, Ir, Pt, and Au.

The foregoing description illustrates the case in which the Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer is interposed between the

orientation control layer of fcc structure and the magnetic layer. However, it is also possible to form the magnetic layer directly on the orientation control layer of fcc structure because both the orientation control layer and the (10.0) plane of the magnetic layer have the two-dimensional lattice with an almost equal lattice spacing, as shown in Fig. 15. However, this construction would result in a decrease in coercive force and an increase in media noise as compared with the construction with the Cr underlayer, because the axis of easy magnetization in the magnetic layer has a slightly weak tendency toward in-plane orientation.

For the magnetic recording medium to have a high coercive force and a low noise level, it is common practice to incorporate the magnetic layer with such an element as Pt, Ta, Ti, and Nb. Incorporation with such an element causes the magnetic layer of hcp structure to have a larger lattice constant and the two-dimension lattice formed by the (10.0) plane of the magnetic layer has a larger lattice spacing. (The lattice constant of Co is shown in Fig. 2.) The result is poor lattice matching between the magnetic layer and the orientation control layer of fcc structure and poor lattice matching between the magnetic layer and the Cr underlayer. Therefore, the underlayer should be made of an alloy having a large lattice constant. Such an alloy is exemplified by those of Cr-Ti (5-50 at.%), Cr-Mo (5-100 at.%), and Cr-Mo-Ti. The underlayer made

of any of these alloys improves the in-plane orientation of the axis of easy orientation of the magnetic layer. It is important that the underlayer have the bcc crystal structure. The Cr-Mo alloy used for the alloy underlayer is a homogeneous solid solution as indicated by its phase diagram for bulk metal and hence it has always the bcc crystal structure. This property makes it easy to produce crystals having any desired lattice spacing. The Cr-Ti alloy gives an underlayer consisting of fine crystal grains and hence the magnetic layer formed thereon also consists of fine crystal grains. This is desirable for noise reduction. However, the Cr-Ti alloy for the underlayer should contain a limited amount of Ti not exceeding 50 at.% because Ti has the hcp crystal structure. The underlayer made of Cr-Mo-Ti alloy has the property derived from respective properties of Cr-Mo alloy and Cr-Ti alloy in proportion to the content of each element. The alloy for the underlayer may contain any of Nb, Ta, and W in place of Cr, Mo, and Ti (although the resulting alloy is slightly inferior to the alloy containing Cr, Mo, and Ti). Other elements than mentioned above should not be used because they disturb crystal orientation and give rise to large crystal grains, which leads to a decrease in coercive force and an increase in noise.

According to a preferred embodiment, the underlayer is of double-layer structure, with the first layer containing Cr and the

second layer which is formed on the first underlayer containing at least one element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti. This underlayer is desirable because it permits the axis of easy magnetization to assume in-plane orientation in the magnetic layer. The results of the present inventors' experiments indicate the following. If the Cr alloy underlayer is formed directly on the orientation control layer of fcc structure, lattice matching between them is poor and hence the crystal orientation in the underlayer as well as the magnetic layer is poor, because the two-dimensional lattice of the former has a much larger lattice spacing than that of the latter. This problem was solved by replacing the underlayer with that of double-layer structure which consists of a first layer of Cr (adjacent to the orientation control layer of fcc structure) and a second layer which has a larger lattice constant than Cr.

The magnetic disk in this example is combined with the magnetic head shown in Fig. 6 to form the magnetic storage device as shown in Fig. 7. The magnetic head is that of spin valve type provided with a magnetoresistive sensor which utilizes the spin valve effect. Owing to the above-mentioned construction, the magnetic storage device in this example has a recording density exceeding 3 Gbit/in². The recording density is three times higher than that of the conventional magnetic storage device. The mag-

netic storage device keeps more than twice the recording density of the conventional magnetic storage device even when the maximum likelihood decoder in the recording-reproducing signal processing unit is replaced with an existing waveform discriminator.

Example 4

This example demonstrates another magnetic disk whose construction and manufacturing process are explained in the following.

As in Example 1 shown in Fig. 3, a glass substrate 30 (65 mm in outside diameter) was covered with an orientation control layer 31 (and 31') of Ni-50at.% Al-2at.% B (100 nm thick) by DC magnetron sputtering under the condition that the substrate temperature is 270°C, the Ar gas pressure is 2.0 mTorr, and the input power density is 0.7 W/cm². On the orientation control layer were sequentially formed a first underlayer 32 (and 32') of Cr (20 nm thick), a second underlayer 33 (and 33') of Cr-30at.% Mo (20 nm thick), a magnetic layer 34 (and 34') of Co-20at.% Cr-12at.% Pt-1.5at.% Ti (20 nm thick), and a protective layer 35 (and 35') of C (5 nm thick) under the same condition as mentioned above. The number preceding each element represents the content of the relevant element.

In Comparative Example 4, a magnetic disk was prepared in the same way as in Example 4 except that the orientation control layer 31 (and 31') of Ni-50at.% Al-2at.% B was replaced by that of Ni-

50at.% Al. The orientation control layer in Example 4 contains B whereas that in Comparative Example 4 does not.

Fig. 16 shows the in-plane magnetic properties and media noise in Example 4 and Comparative Example 4. The value of media noise is that which was measured for signals recorded at 250 kFCI. The value in Example 4 is unity and the value in Comparative Example 4 is relative to unity. It is noted that the magnetic disk in Example 4 is higher in coercive force (H_c) and lower in media noise than that in Comparative Example 4. It is also noted that the magnetic disk in Example 4 is higher in coercivity squareness (S^*) than that in Comparative Example 4. This suggests a better resolution.

The CoCrPt magnetic layer was tested for diffraction intensity at the (10.0) plane by X-ray diffraction. The results are shown in Fig. 17. The value in Example 4 is unity and the value in Comparative Example 4 is relative to unity. The larger the value, the more the axis of easy magnetization orients in the plane of the magnetic layer. It is understood that the diffraction intensity is higher and there are more magnetic particles whose axis of easy magnetization orients in the plane in Example 4 than in Comparative Example 4.

The CoCrPt magnetic layer of the magnetic disk in both Example 4 and Comparative Example 4 does not give diffraction due to

the (11.0) plane. This suggests that the crystal grains in the magnetic layer has the uni-crystalline-structure.

Experiments with the orientation control layer incorporated with B in varied content gave the result shown in Fig. 18. The abscissa represents the content of B added and the ordinate represents the media noise in terms of relative values, with the value for 2 at.% B being unity. The content at 0.001 at.% on the abscissa represents a null content, because the logarithmic scale does not have zero. For the magnetic recording medium to have a recording density exceeding 3Gbit/in², it is necessary to reduce the media noise below 1.3. This requirement is met when the content of B is in the range of 0.05 to 15 at.%.

The same result as above is obtained when the material for the orientation control layers 31 and 31' is replaced by any of the following alloys and incorporated with B in an amount of 2 at.%. Al-50at.% Co, Al-50at.% Fe, Al-50at.% Pd, Co-50at.% Ga, Co-50at.% Fe, Co-50at.% Ti, Cu-50at.% Pd, Cu-50at.% Zn, Ga-50at.% Ni, Ga-50at.% Rh, Ru-50at.% Si.

In this example, a mention was made of the magnetic disk in which the Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer is interposed between the magnetic layer and the orientation control layer of B2 structure. However, the construction of the magnetic disk may be modified such that the magnetic layer is formed directly on the

orientation control layer of B2 structure. This poses no problem in view of the fact that the two-dimensional lattice of the magnetic layer and the two-dimensional lattice of the orientation control layer of B2 structure have almost the same lattice spacing. However, in the case where the Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer is not formed, the axis of easy magnetization has a slightly weak tendency toward in-plane orientation in the magnetic layer. This leads to a decrease in coercive force and an increase in noise level.

For the magnetic recording medium to have a high coercive force and a low noise level, it is common practice to incorporate the magnetic layer with such an element as Pt, Ta, Ti, and Nb. Incorporation with such an element causes the magnetic layer of hcp structure to have a larger lattice constant and the two-dimension lattice formed by the (10.0) plane of the magnetic layer has a larger lattice spacing. The result is poor lattice matching between the magnetic layer and the orientation control layer of B2 structure and poor lattice matching between the magnetic layer and the Cr underlayer. Therefore, the underlayer should be made of an alloy having a large lattice constant. Such an alloy is exemplified by those of Cr-Ti (5-50 at.%), Cr-Mo (5-100 at.%), and Cr-Mo-Ti. The underlayer made of any of these alloys improves the in-plane orientation of the axis of easy orientation of the magnetic

layer. It is important that the underlayer have the bcc crystal structure. The Cr-Mo alloy used for the alloy underlayer is a homogeneous solid solution as indicated by its phase diagram for bulk metal and hence it has always the bcc crystal structure. This property makes it easy to produce crystals having any desired lattice spacing. The Cr-Ti alloy gives an underlayer consisting of fine crystal grains and hence the magnetic layer formed thereon also consists of fine crystal grains. This is desirable for noise reduction. However, the Cr-Ti alloy for the underlayer should contain a limited amount of Ti not exceeding 50 at.% because Ti has the hcp crystal structure. The underlayer made of Cr-Mo-Ti alloy has the property derived from respective properties of Cr-Mo alloy and Cr-Ti alloy in proportion to the content of each element. The alloy for the underlayer may contain any of Nb, Ta, and W in place of Cr, Mo, and Ti (although the resulting alloy is slightly inferior to the alloy containing Cr, Mo, and Ti). Other elements than mentioned above should not be used because they disturb crystal orientation and give rise to large crystal grains, which leads to a decrease in coercive force and an increase in noise.

According to a preferred embodiment, the underlayer is of double-layer structure, with the first layer containing Cr and the second layer which is formed on the first underlayer containing at least one element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti. This

underlayer is desirable because it permits the axis of easy magnetization to assume in-plane orientation in the magnetic layer. The results of the present inventors' experiments indicate the following. If the Cr alloy underlayer is formed directly on the orientation control layer of B2 structure, lattice matching between them is poor and hence the crystal orientation in the underlayer as well as the magnetic layer is poor, because the two-dimensional lattice of the former has a much larger lattice spacing than that of the latter. This problem was solved by replacing the underlayer with that of double-layer structure which consists of a first layer of Cr (adjacent to the orientation control layer of B2 structure) and a second layer which has a larger lattice constant than Cr.

The magnetic disk in this example is combined with the magnetic head shown in Fig. 6 to form the magnetic storage device as shown in Fig. 7. The magnetic head is that of spin valve type provided with a magnetoresistive sensor which utilizes the spin valve effect. Owing to the above-mentioned construction, the magnetic storage device in this example has a recording density exceeding 3 Gbit/in². The recording density is three times higher than that of the conventional magnetic storage device. The magnetic storage device keeps more than twice the recording density of the conventional magnetic storage device even when the maximum likelihood decoder in the recording-reproducing signal processing

unit is replaced with an existing waveform discriminator.

The present invention materializes a magnetic recording medium which has a high coercive force and a low noise level and is only slightly vulnerable to thermal fluctuation.

This magnetic recording medium is combined with a magnetic head having a reproducing element that utilizes the magnetoresistive effect, so as to provide a magnetic storage device which has a recording density in excess of 3 Gbit/in².

Patented Feb 24 1988

CLAIMS

1. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon directly or indirectly with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer containing at least Ti in an amount not less than 35 at.% and not more than 65 at.% and Al in an amount not less than 35 at.% and not more than 65 at.%.

2. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 1, wherein the orientation control layer substantially has the L10-type (AuCu I-type) crystal structure.

3. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon directly or indirectly with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer having the crystal structure substantially of L10-type (AuCu I-type).

4. A magnetic recording medium as defined in any of Claims 1 to 3, wherein the underlayer is that of double-layer structure which consists of a first underlayer made of Cr and a second underlayer which is formed on the first underlayer containing at least one species of element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti.

5. A magnetic recording medium as defined in any of Claims 1

to 4, which has an intermediate layer between the magnetic layer and the underlayer, said intermediate layer being made of a material containing Co and not less than 25 at.% Cr.

6. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer containing at least one element selected from group A (consisting of Ni and Co) in an amount of from 30 at.% to 60 at.%, Al in an amount from 20 at.% to 30 at.%, and one element selected from group B (consisting of Ti and Zr) in an amount from 20 at.% to 30 at.%.

7. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 6, wherein the orientation control layer substantially has the L21-type (Cu_2AlMn type) crystal structure.

8. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon directly or indirectly with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer having the crystal structure substantially of L21-type (Cu_2AlMn type).

9. A magnetic recording medium as defined in any of Claims 6 to 8, wherein the underlayer is that of double-layer structure which consists of a first underlayer made of Cr and a second under-

layer which is formed on the first underlayer containing at least one species of element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti.

10. A magnetic recording medium as defined in any of Claims 6 to 9, which has an intermediate layer between the magnetic layer and the underlayer, said intermediate layer being made of a material containing Co and not less than 25 at.% Cr.

11. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer containing at least one species of element selected from Al, Cu, Rh, Pd, Ag, Ir, Pt, and Au in an amount not less than 70 at.%.

12. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 11, wherein the orientation control layer substantially has the fcc crystal structure.

13. A magnetic recording medium which comprises a substrate, an orientation control layer formed thereon, and a Co alloy magnetic layer formed thereon directly or indirectly with a Cr underlayer or Cr alloy underlayer interposed between them, said orientation control layer having the crystal structure substantially of fcc type.

14. A magnetic recording medium as defined in any of Claims 11 to 13, wherein the underlayer is that of double-layer structure

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15. A magnetic recording medium as defined in any of Claims 11 to 14, which has an intermediate layer between the magnetic layer and the underlayer, said intermediate layer being made of a material containing Co and not less than 25 at.% Cr.

17. A magnetic recording medium as defined in Claim 16, in which the content of B in the orientation control layer is not less than 0.05 at.% and not more than 15 at.%.

19. A magnetic recording medium as defined in any of Claims 16 to 18, wherein the underlayer is that of double-layer structure which consists of a first underlayer made of Cr and a second under-

layer which is formed on the first underlayer containing at least one species of element selected from Cr, Nb, Mo, Ta, W, and Ti.

20. A magnetic recording medium as defined in any of Claims 16 to 19, which has an intermediate layer between the magnetic layer and the underlayer, said intermediate layer being made of a material containing Co and not less than 25 at.% Cr.

21. A magnetic storage device having a magnetic recording medium, a driver to turn said magnetic recording medium in the recording direction, a magnetic head consisting of a recording element and a read-back element, a means to move said magnetic head relative to said magnetic recording medium, and a record-read signal processing means to perform waveform processing on input signals to and output signals from said magnetic head, wherein said magnetic recording medium is the magnetic recording medium defined in any of Claims 1 to 20 and the read-back element of said magnetic head is that of magnetoresistive effect type.

FIG. 1

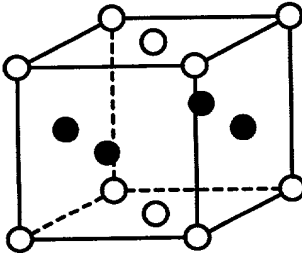
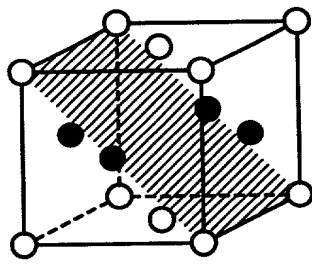
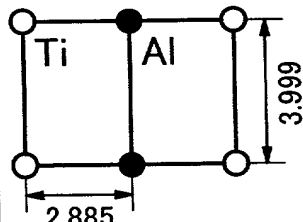
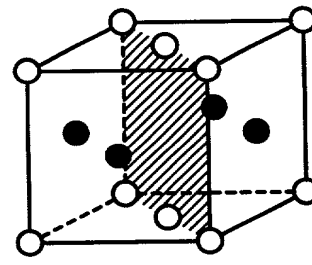
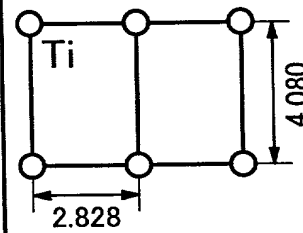
CRYSTAL STRUCTURE	LATTICE PLANE PARALLEL TO THE SUBSTRATE SURFACE (ORIENTATIONAL PLANE)	IN-PLACE CRYSTAL LATTICE
<p>L1₀ TYPE STRUCTURE</p> <p>TiAl₅₀</p> <p>$a=3.999 \text{ \AA}$</p> <p>$c=4.080 \text{ \AA}$</p> <p>○ Ti ATOM</p> <p>● Al ATOM</p>  <p>NUMBER OF ATOMS IN UNIT CELL</p> <p>Ti ATOM : 2</p> <p>Al ATOM : 2</p> <p>COMPOSITION IN UNIT CELL</p> <p>Ti : Al = 1:1</p>	<p>(101), (011)</p> 	 <p>Ti : Al = 1:1</p>
	<p>(110)</p> 	<p>THIS ORIENTATION IS DIFFICULT</p>  <p>Ti ONLY Al ONLY</p>

FIG. 2

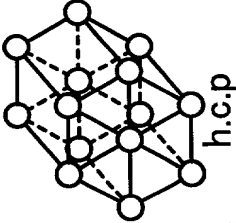
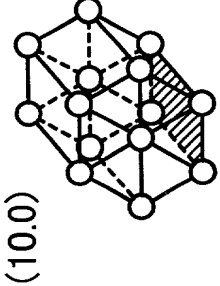
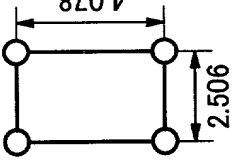
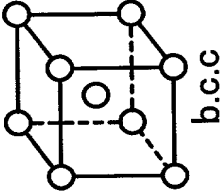
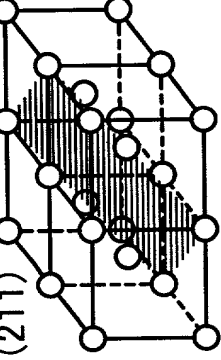
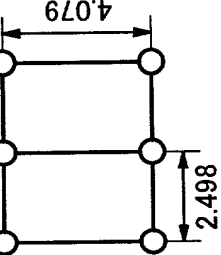
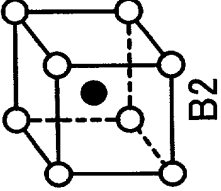
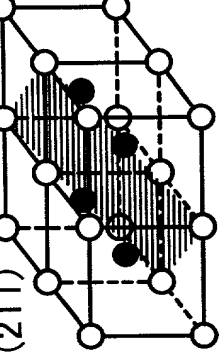
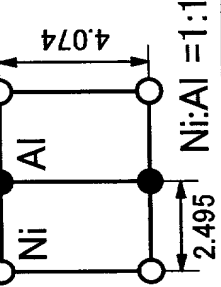
	CRYSTAL STRUCTURE	LATTICE PLANE PARALLEL TO THE SUBSTRATE SURFACE (ORIENTATIONAL PLANE)	IN-PLACE CRYSTAL LATTICE
MAGNETIC LAYER Co $a=2.506 \text{ \AA}$ $c=4.078 \text{ \AA}$			
UNDER LAYER Cr $a=2.884 \text{ \AA}$			
ORIENTATION CONTROL LAYER HAVING B2 TYPE CRYSTAL STRUCTURE NiAl ₅₀ $a=2.881 \text{ \AA}$			

FIG. 3

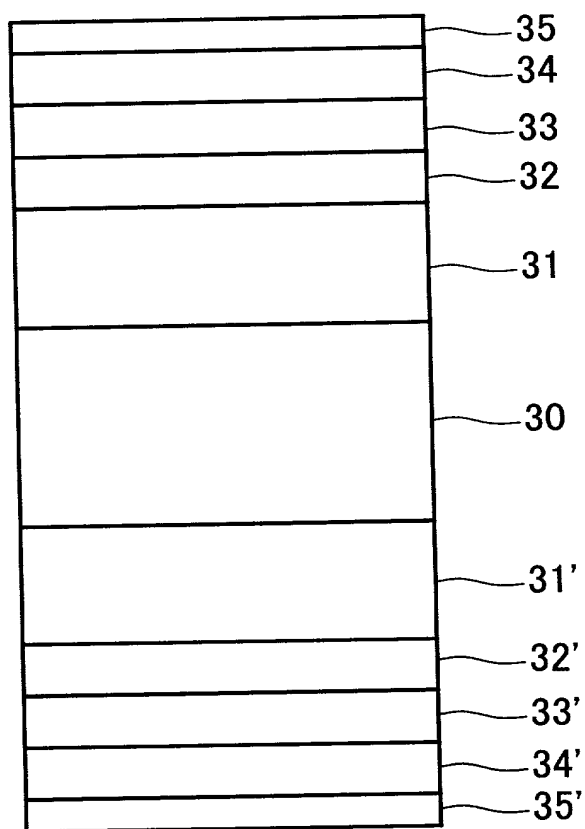


FIG. 4

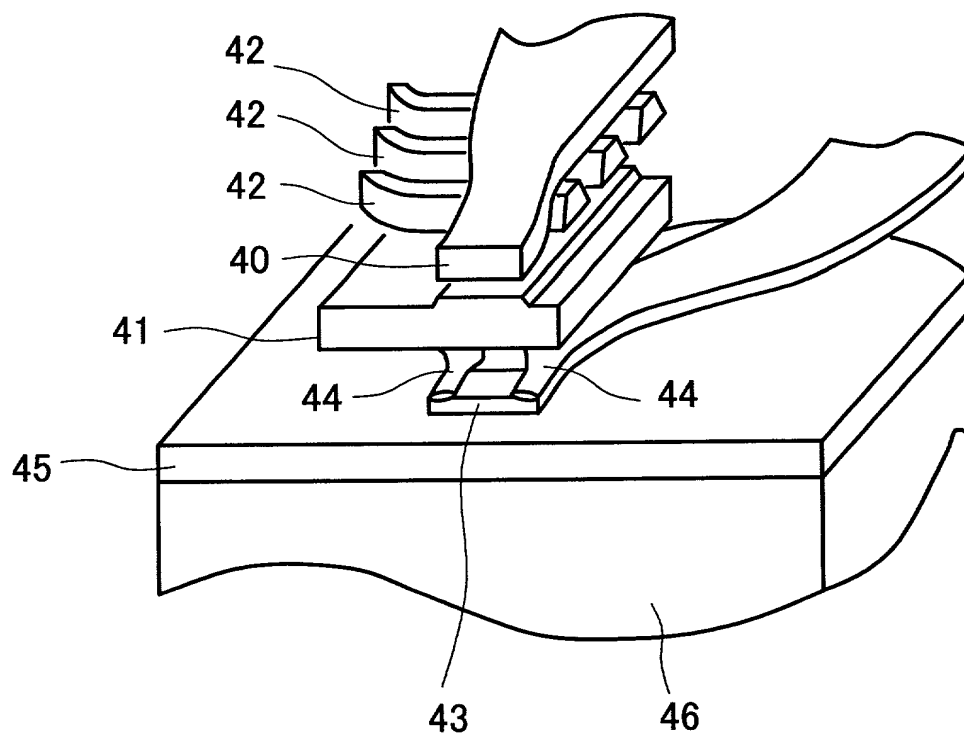


FIG. 5

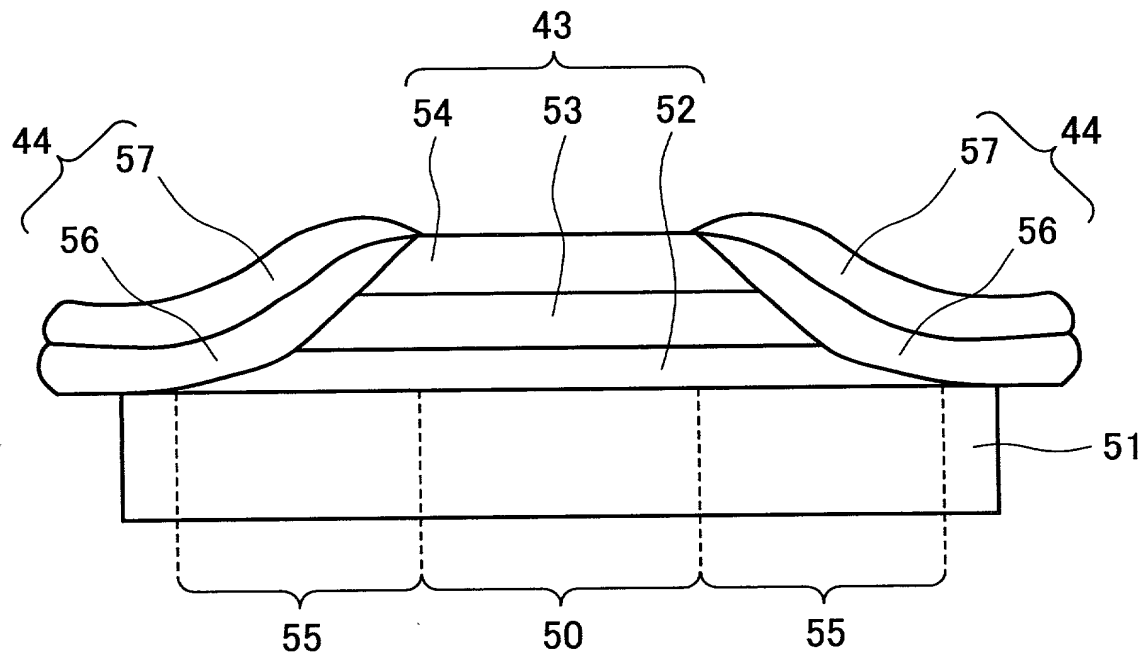


FIG. 6

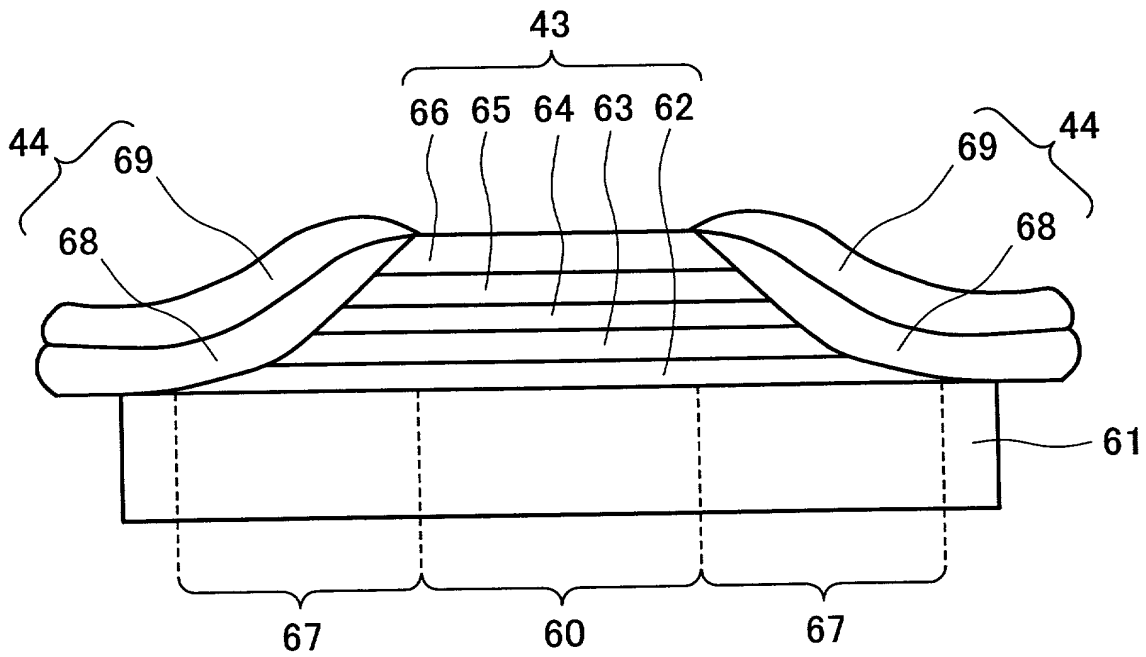


FIG. 7A

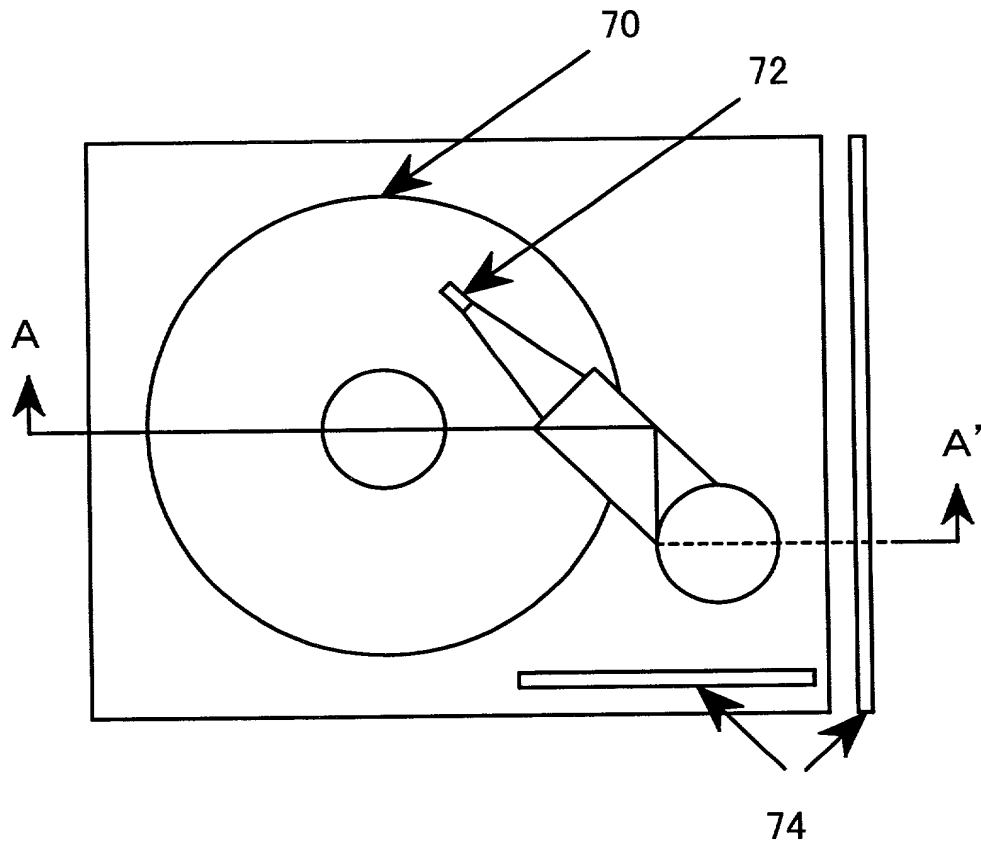


FIG. 7B

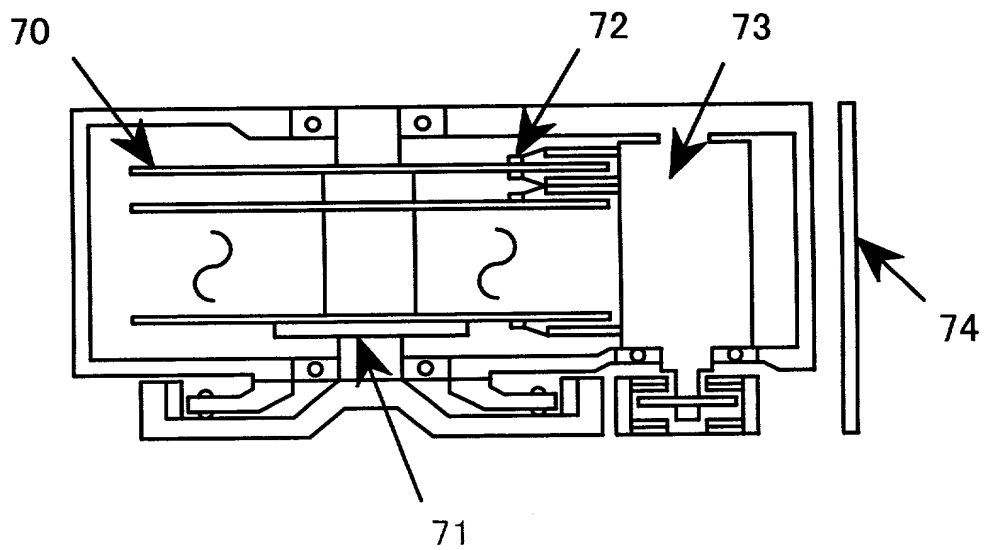


FIG. 8

	H _c [kOe]	S*	MEDIA NOISE
EXAMPLE 1	3.8	0.85	1.0
COMPARISON 1	3.0	0.70	2.0

FIG. 9

	C _o C _r P _t (10,0) DIFFRACTION INTENSITY BY XRD (RELATIVE INTENSITY)
EXAMPLE 1	1.0
COMPARISON 1	0.7

FIG. 10

	H _c [kOe]	S*	MEDIA NOISE
EXAMPLE 2	3.8	0.85	1.0
COMPARISON 2	3.0	0.70	2.0

FIG. 11

	C _o C _r P _t (10,0) DIFFRACTION INTENSITY BY XRD (RELATIVE INTENSITY)
EXAMPLE 2	1.0
COMPARISON 2	0.7

FIG. 12

CRYSTAL STRUCTURE...L2₁TARGET ...NiAl₂₅Ti₂₅ (a=5.87 Å)

· NUMBER OF ATOMS
IN UNIT CELL

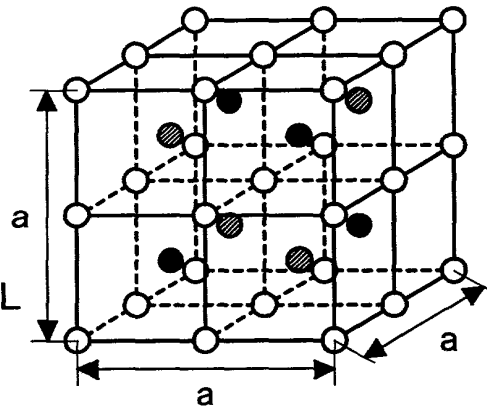
Ni ATOM : 8

Al ATOM : 4

Ti ATOM : 4

· COMPOSITION IN UNIT CELL

Ni:Al:Ti=2:1:1

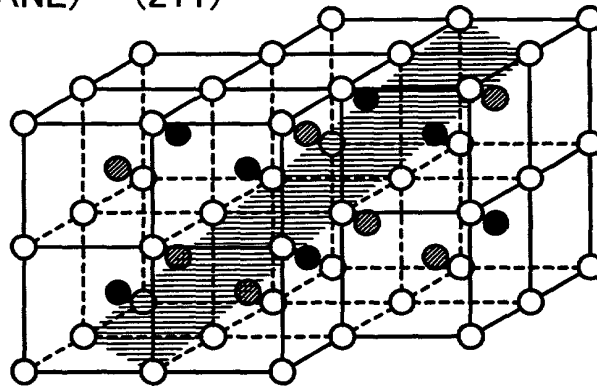


LATTICE PLANE PARALLEL TO THE SUBSTRATE SURFACE
(ORIENTATIONAL PLANE)...(211)

○ Ni ATOM

◐ Al ATOM

● Ti ATOM



IN-PLACE CRYSTAL LATTICE

COMPOSITION IN UNIT CELL ...Ni:Al:Ti=2:1:1

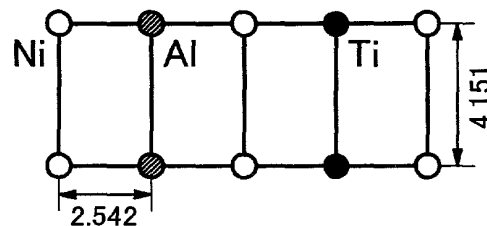


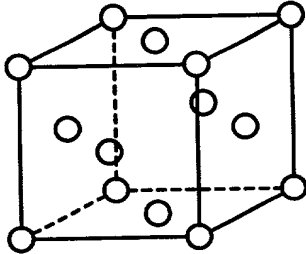
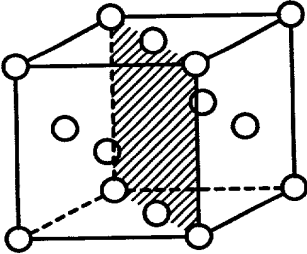
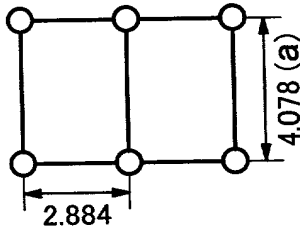
FIG. 13

	H _c [kOe]	S*	MEDIA NOISE
EXAMPLE 3	3.5	0.80	1.0
COMPARISON 3	3.0	0.70	1.7

FIG. 14

	C _o C _r P _t (10,0) DIFFRACTION INTENSITY BY XRD (RELATIVE INTENSITY)
EXAMPLE 3	1.0
COMPARISON 3	0.7

FIG. 15

CRYSTAL STRUCTURE	LATTICE PLANE PARALLEL TO THE SUBSTRATE SURFACE (ORIENTATIONAL PLANE)	IN-PLACE CRYSTAL LATTICE
f.c.c. STRUCTURE Au $a=4.078 \text{ \AA}$ 	(110) 	 $(a\sqrt{2}/2)$

ELEMENT	$a \text{ \AA}$	$a\sqrt{2}/2 [\text{\AA}]$
Al	4.051	2.864
Cu	3.615	2.556
Rh	3.803	2.689
Pd	3.890	2.751
Ag	4.086	2.889
Ir	3.839	2.715
Pt	3.923	2.774
At	4.078	2.884

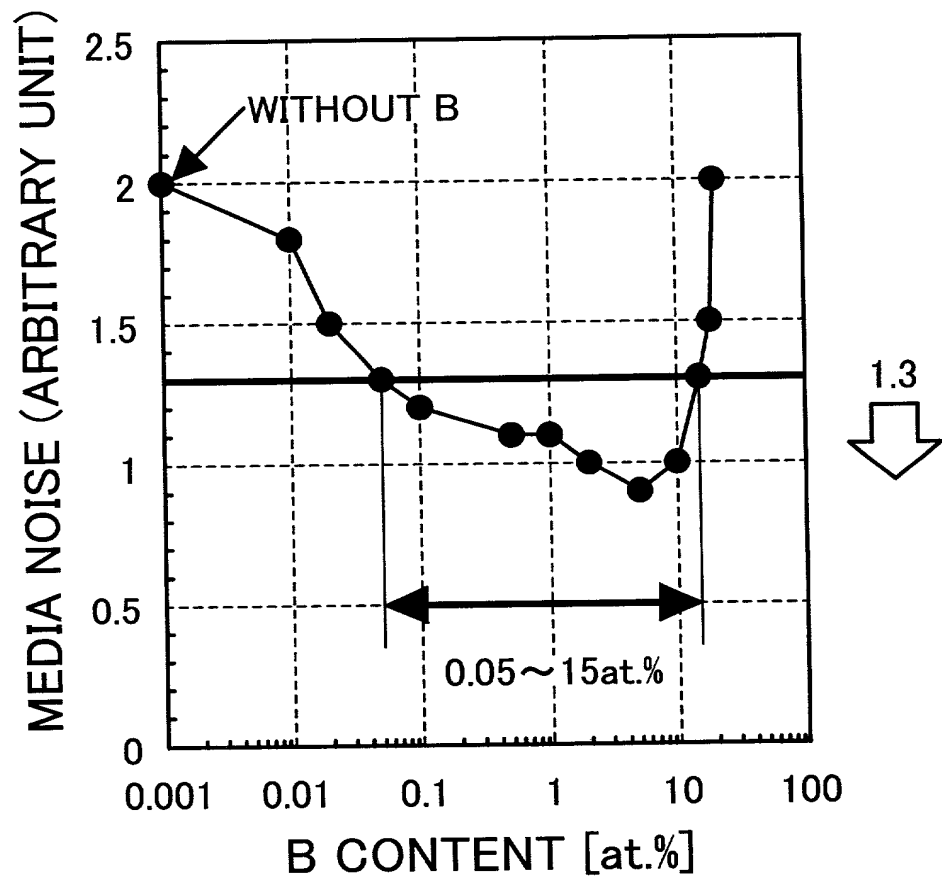
FIG. 16

	H _c [kOe]	S*	MEDIA NOISE
EXAMPLE 4	3.2	0.80	1.0
COMPARISON 4	3.0	0.70	2.0

FIG. 17

	C _o C _r P _t (10,0) DIFFRACTION INTENSITY BY XRD (RELATIVE INTENSITY)
EXAMPLE 4	1.0
COMPARISON 4	0.8

FIG. 18



Declaration and Power of Attorney For Patent Application

特許出願宣言書及び委任状

Japanese Language Declaration

日本語宣言書

下記の氏名の発明者として、私は以下の通り宣言します。

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

私の住所、私書箱、国籍は下記の私の氏名の後に記載された通りです。

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated next to my name.

下記の名称の発明に関して請求範囲に記載され、特許出願している発明内容について、私が最初かつ唯一の発明者（下記の氏名が一つの場合）もしくは最初かつ共同発明者であると（下記の名称が複数の場合）信じています。

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled

MAGNETIC RECORDING MEDIUM AND MAGNETIC

STORAGE DEVICE

上記発明の明細書（下記の欄で×印がついていない場合は、本書に添付）は、

The specification of which is attached hereto unless the following box is checked:

☐ __月__日に提出され、米国出願番号または特許協定条約国際出願番号を____とし、
(該当する場合) _____に訂正されました。

☒ was filed on March 31, 1999
as United States Application Number or
PCT International Application Number
PCT/JP99/01679 and was amended on
_____ (if applicable).

私は、特許請求範囲を含む上記訂正後の明細書を検討し、内容を理解していることをここに表明します。

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

私は、連邦規則法典第37編第1条56項に定義されるとおり、特許資格の有無について重要な情報を開示する義務があることを認めます。

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56.

Japanese Language Declaration

(日本語宣言書)

私は、米国法典第35編119条(a)-(d)項又は365条(b)項に基づき下記の、米国以外の国の少なくとも一カ国を指定している特許協力条約365(a)項に基づく国際出願、又は外国での特許出願もしくは発明者証の出願についての外国優先権をここに主張するとともに、優先権を主張している、本出願の前に出願された特許または発明者証の外国出願を以下に、枠内をマークすることで、示しています。

Prior Foreign Application(s)

外国での先行出願

(Number) (番号)	(Country) (国名)
(Number) (番号)	(Country) (国名)

I hereby claim foreign priority under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119 (a)-(d) or 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or 365(a) of any PCT international application which designated at least one country other than the United States, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or PCT International application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Priority Not Claimed

優先権主張なし

(Day/Month/Year Filed) (出願年月日)
(Day/Month/Year Filed) (出願年月日)

☐

(Day/Month/Year Filed) (出願年月日)
(Day/Month/Year Filed) (出願年月日)

☐

私は、第35編米国法典119条(e)項に基づいて下記の米国外特許出願規定に記載された権利をここに主張いたします。

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

(Application No.) (出願番号)	(Filing Date) (出願日)
(Application No.) (出願番号)	(Filing Date) (出願日)

(Application No.) (出願番号)	(Filing Date) (出願日)
(Application No.) (出願番号)	(Filing Date) (出願日)

私は、下記の米国法典第35編120条に基づいて下記の米国外特許出願に記載された権利、又は米国を指定している特許協力条約365条(c)に基づき権利をここに主張します。また、本出願の各請求範囲の内容が米国法典第35編112条第1項又は特許協力条約で規定された方法で先行する米国外特許出願に開示されていない限り、その先行米国外出願書提出日以降で本出願書の日本国内または特許協力条約国際提出日までの期間中に入手された、連邦規則法典第37編1条56項で定義された特許資格の有無に関する重要な情報について開示義務があることを認識しています。

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, Section 120 of any United States application(s), or 365(c) of any PCT international application designating the United States, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code Section 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of application.

(Application No.) (出願番号)	(Filing Date) (出願日)
(Application No.) (出願番号)	(Filing Date) (出願日)

(Status: Patented, Pending, Abandoned) (現況: 特許許可済、係属中、放棄済)
(Status: Patented, Pending, Abandoned) (現況: 特許許可済、係属中、放棄済)

(Application No.) (出願番号)	(Filing Date) (出願日)
(Application No.) (出願番号)	(Filing Date) (出願日)

(Status: Patented, Pending, Abandoned) (現況: 特許許可済、係属中、放棄済)
(Status: Patented, Pending, Abandoned) (現況: 特許許可済、係属中、放棄済)

私は、私自身の知識に基づいて本宣言書中で私が行なう表明が真実であり、かつ私の入手した情報と私の信じることに基づき表明が全て真実であると信じていること、さらに故意になされた虚偽の表明及びそれと同等の行為は米国法典第18編第1001条に基づき、罰金または拘禁、もしくはその両方により処罰されること、そしてそのような故意による虚偽の声明を行えば、出願した、又は既に許可された特許の有効性が失われることを認識し、よってここに上記のごとく宣誓を致します。

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Japanese Language Declaration

(日本語宣言書)

委任状： 私は下記の発明者として、本出願に関する一切の手続きを米特許商標局に対して遂行する弁理士または代理人として、下記の者を指名いたします。(弁護士、または代理人の氏名及び登録番号を明記のこと)

POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith (*list name and registration number*)

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(Supply similar information and signature for second and subsequent joint inventors.)

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

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国籍	Citizenship	
私書箱	Post Office Address	
第五共同発明者名	Full name of fifth joint inventor, if any	
第五共同発明者の署名	日付	Fifth inventor's signature Date
住所	Residence	
国籍	Citizenship	
私書箱	Post Office Address	